Eastern
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COMICS™
No. 2
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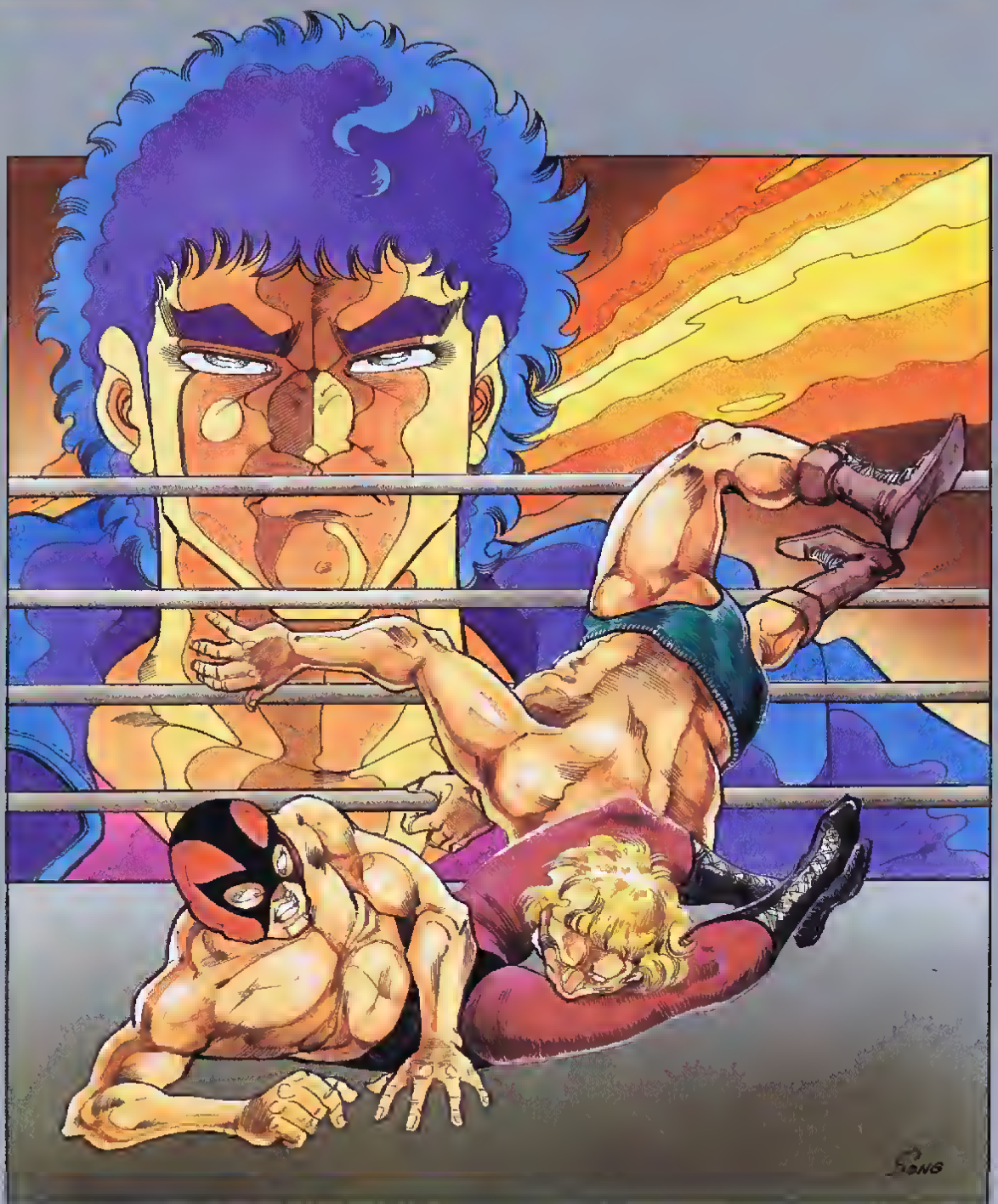
BLACKMASK

Jong-Jin Lee
Franz Henkel



Eastern Comics

BLACKMASK #2

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Since January, Eastern Comics has added one new title to its line-up each month. In addition to **Blackmask**, we currently have **The Demon Warrior** and **The Forbidden Kingdom** in the stands. Soon, you should see the first issue of **Trickster King Monkey**, based on a 16th-century Chinese folk novel, and shortly after that we will be starting our serialization of **Untouchables**, the number one comic book in Korean history. We have our first color comic book in the works for release this summer, and it's going to be a hot one!

As we make our long-range plans, we'd like to take this chance to ask our readers for their input in the form of suggestions, comments, and/or criticisms. What would you like to see next? What do you think of Korean comic books? Would you prefer more translations or would you rather see new stories? Please send your letters (typewritten if possible) to our office at 1630 Oakland Road, Suite A-108, San Jose, CA 95131. You may address any member of our staff. Although we will not be able to answer each letter individually, selected letters, along with our responses, will be published in forthcoming issues of Eastern Comics.

We shall look forward to hearing from you.

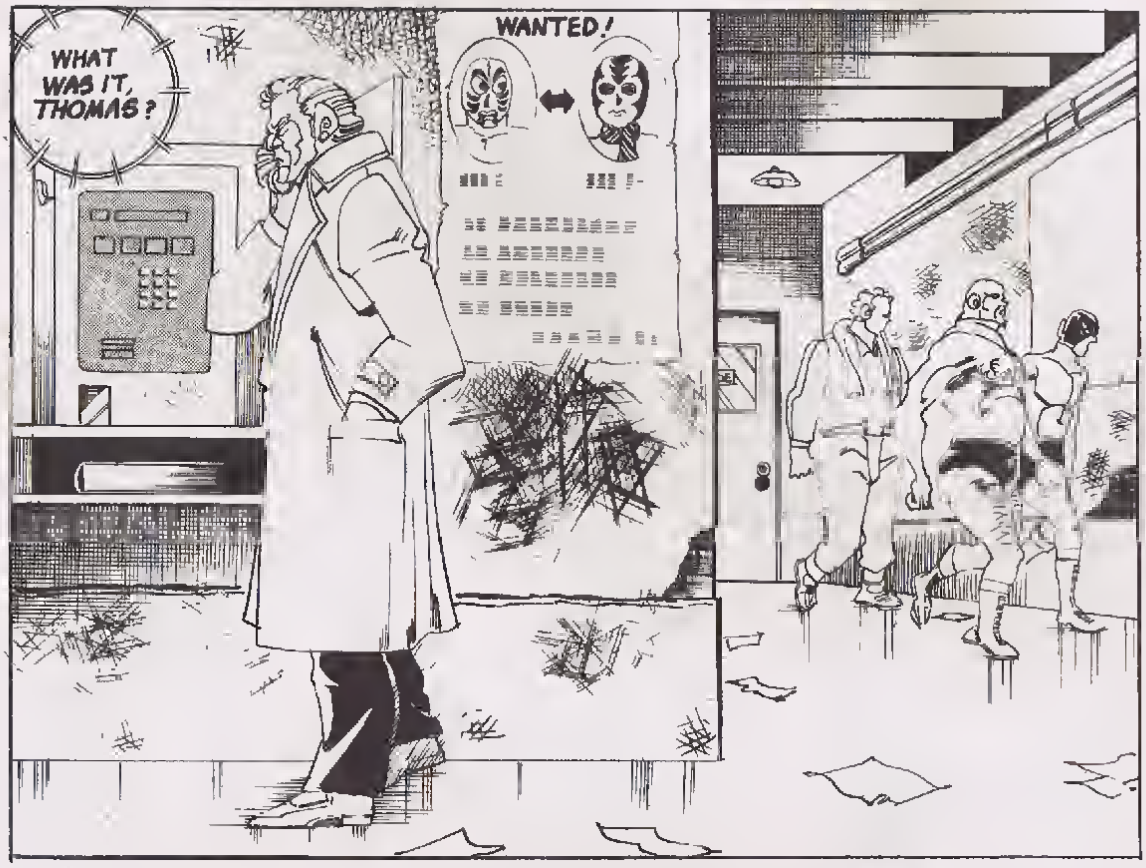
MONDAY 3:00 A.M.
I WAS TIRED TODAY, ELIZABETH. I FELL ASLEEP FOR A MOMENT, BUT I DID NOT WAKE IN YOUR WORLD. I DREAMT OF YOU. YOU HAD TAKEN A WHOLE BOTTLE OF QUAALUDES, EMPTIED A FLASK OF WINE... AND YOU WERE STAGGERING TO THE POOL WHERE THEY WOULD FIND YOUR BODY... BUT SOMEONE STOPPED YOU. HIS NAME IS JASON ROYT, AND THE MOB MURDERED HIS SISTER, WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU, ELIZABETH...

A STUNNED AND DISAPPOINTED AUDIENCE SLOWLY FILES OUT AFTER CHAMP JACKSON'S UNEXPECTED DEFEAT...

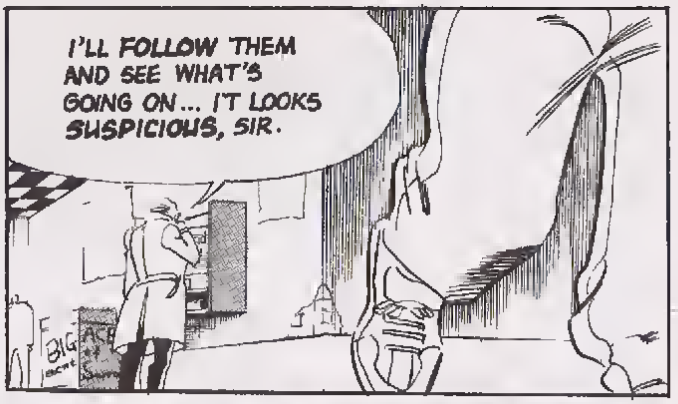
PAST THE SEARCHING EYES OF DETECTIVE THOMAS, NCPD...

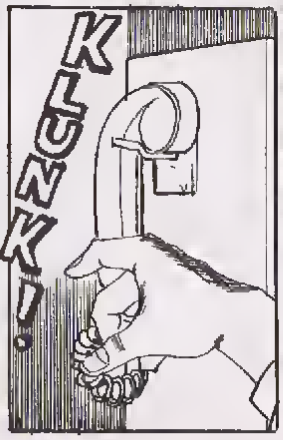
DAMN! I LOST THE KID/ OLD MAN KENT ISN'T GOING TO LIKE THIS... WHAT AM I GOING TO TELL HIM? I NEED A GOOD EXCUSE...

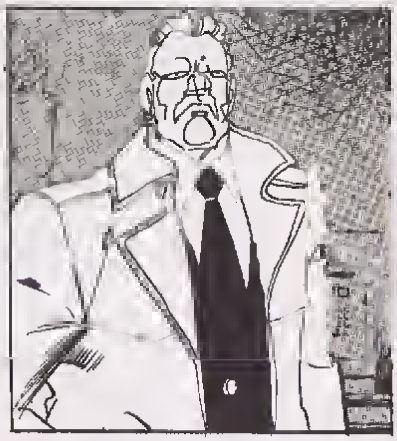
UH... HELLO, INSPECTOR... THIS IS THOMAS CALLING FROM THE STADIUM...
I... UH... WELL, I FOLLOWED THE ROYT BOY TO THE STADIUM LIKE YOU SAID, BUT AFTER THE MATCH... THE CROWD...
YOU MEAN YOU LOST HIM?
I'M REALLY SORRY, SIR. BUT THERE WERE JUST SO MANY PEOPLE HERE I COULDN'T...
SO FIND HIM! JASON ROYT IS THE KEY TO THIS CASE, AND HIS LIFE IS IN DANGER! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE HIM, THOMAS.
THIS JASON KID IS GOING TO BE OUR TICKET TO THE GOLDEN FLEECE!
Y-YES, INSPECTOR, I KNOW... YES, SIR!
INSPECTOR, HOLD ON A MOMENT. I THINK I HEAR FOOTSTEPS...


WHAT WAS IT, THOMAS?
WANTED!

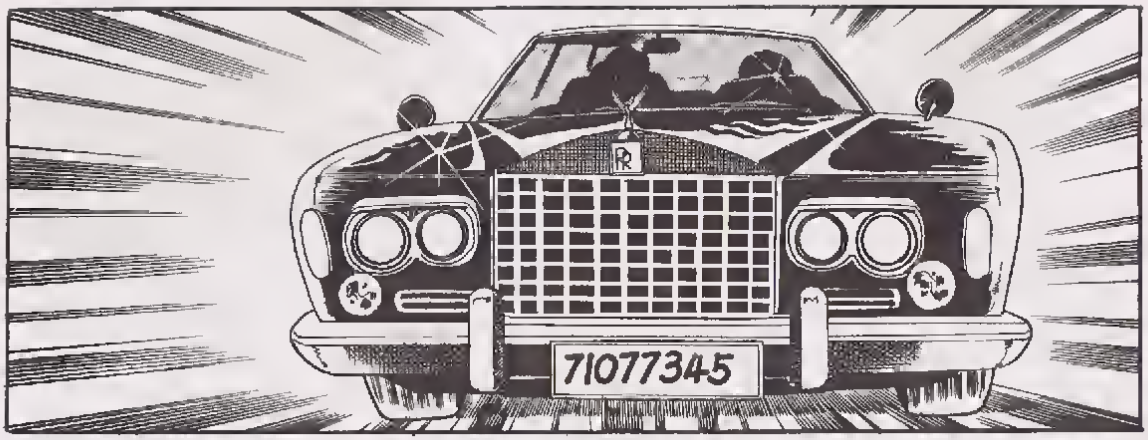
CHAMP JACKSON AND SOME YOUNG GUY IN A MASK ARE HEADED OUT TO THE EMPTY STADIUM, INSPECTOR. SEEMS ODD...


I'LL FOLLOW THEM AND SEE WHAT'S GOING ON... IT LOOKS SUSPICIOUS, SIR.


CLICK!



WADDAYA WAITIN' FOR HUH?
WHERE YA THINK YOUR GOIN', EH? SHOWS OVER AND GOOD LITTLE FAN BOYS GOTTA GO HOME TO BED.
I... UH...
NOW GET ON HOME AND HAVE MOMMA TUCK YOU IN!
OR MAYBE YOU WAITIN' AROUND SO YOU CAN GO A ROUND OR TWO WITH ME? I LIKE TO CRUSH DINKY HEADS LIKE YOURS, FAN BOY.
WELL, ACTUALLY, I'M WITH THE PO-
ACTUALLY WHAT? YOU WITH THE PONY EXPRESS?
N-NO. JUST FORGET I WAS HERE. SORRY.
BETTER NOT TO LET HIM KNOW I'M WITH THE NCPD.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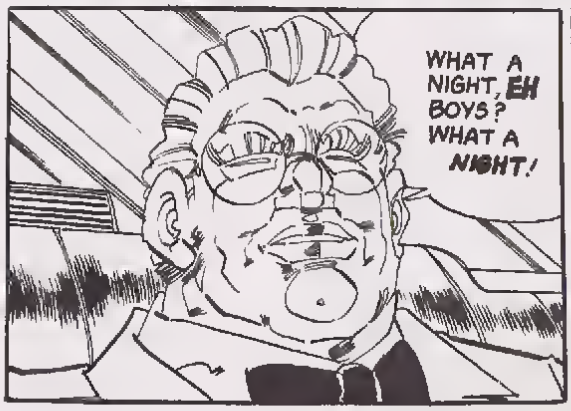
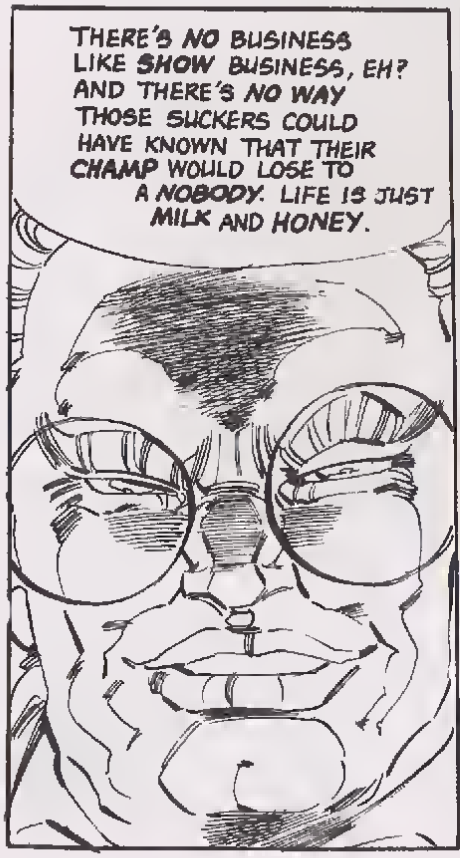
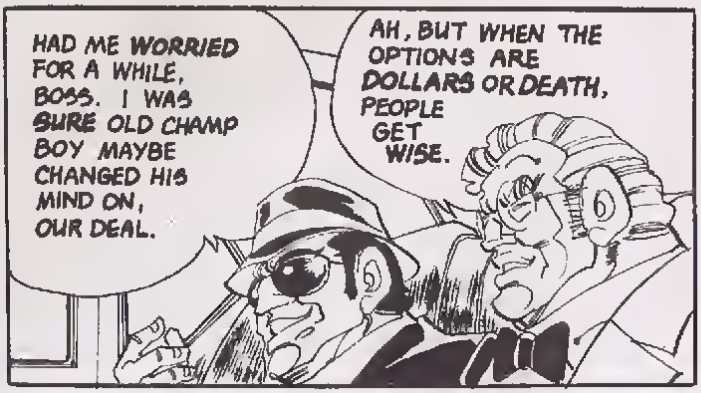
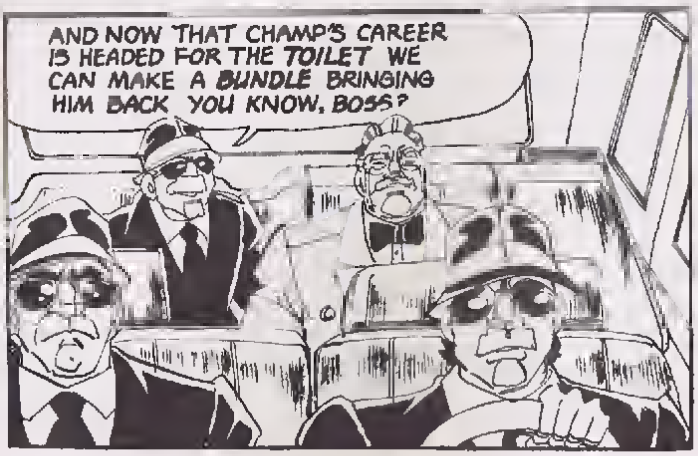

WHAT A NIGHT, EH BOYS? WHAT A NIGHT!

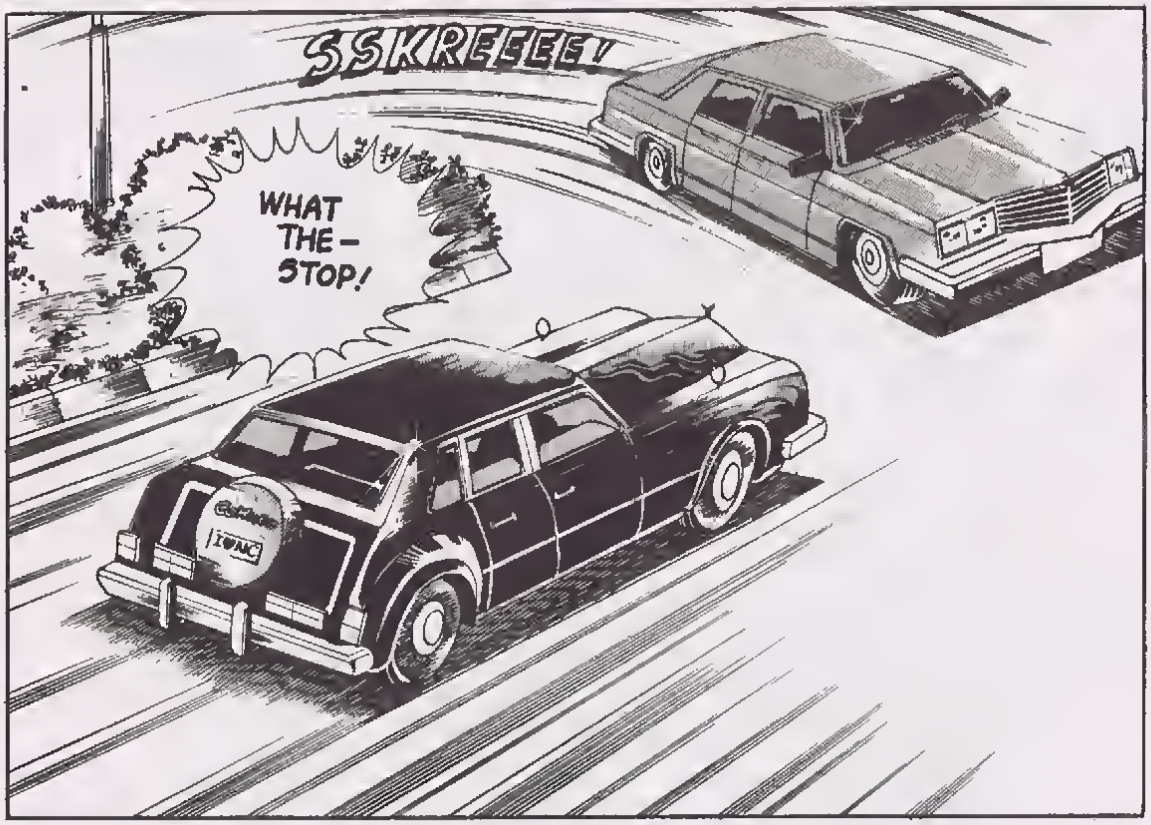
THAT'S AT LEAST A COOL MILLION TAX-, ,EE TONIGHT, BOSS.
HA HA HA HA HA!


THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS, EH? AND THERE'S NO WAY THOSE SUCKERS COULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THEIR CHAMP WOULD LOSE TO A NOBODY. LIFE IS JUST MILK AND HONEY.


HAD ME WORRIED FOR A WHILE, BOSS. I WAS SURE OLD CHAMP BOY MAYBE CHANGED HIS MIND ON, OUR DEAL.
AH, BUT WHEN THE OPTIONS ARE DOLLARS OR DEATH, PEOPLE GET WISE.


AND NOW THAT CHAMP'S CAREER IS HEADED FOR THE TOILET WE CAN MAKE A BUNDLE BRINGING HIM BACK YOU KNOW, BOSS?

DOLLARS MAKE LOST A SENSE, BOSS!


SSKREEEEV
WHAT THE— STOP!

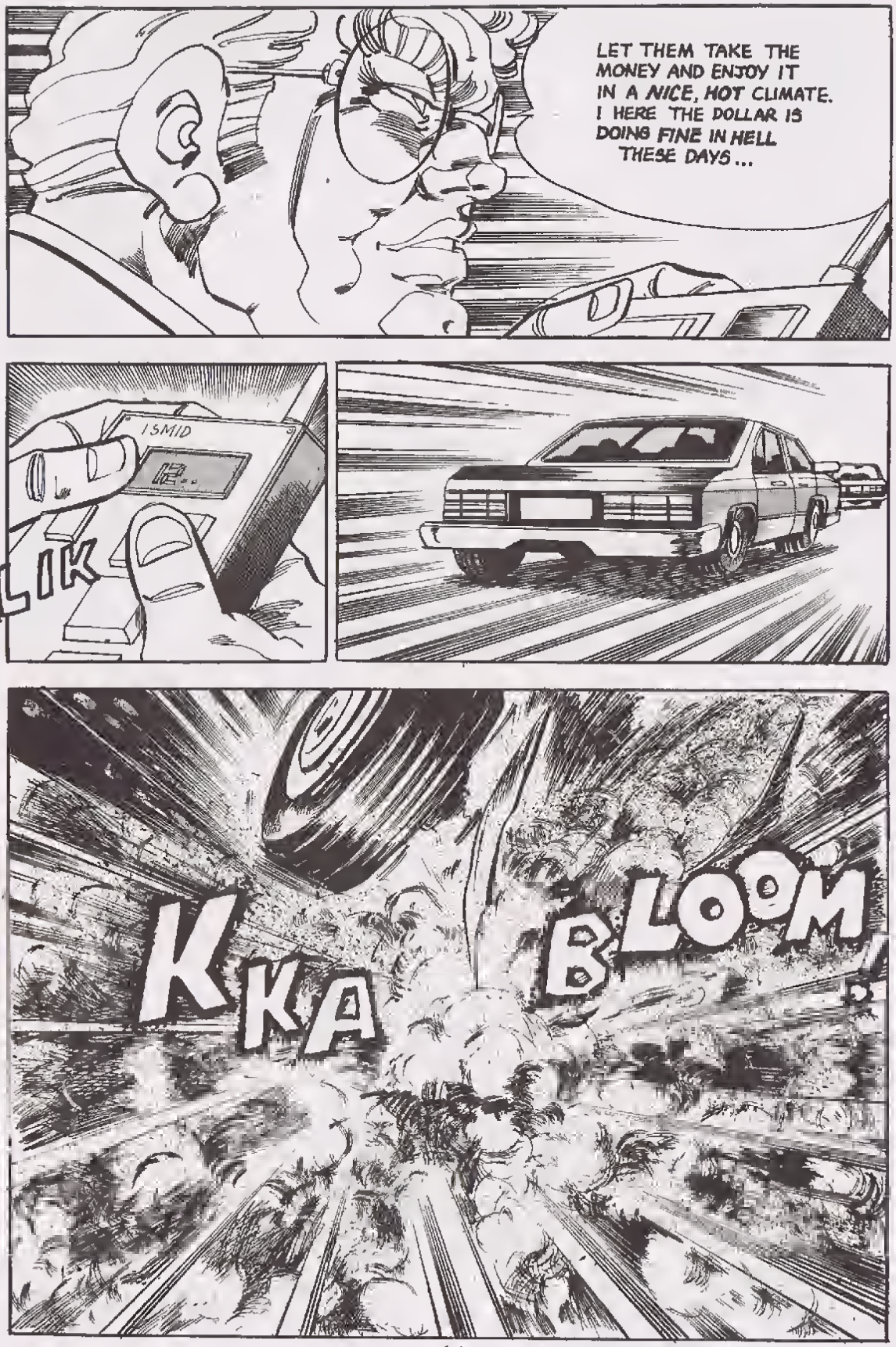
WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

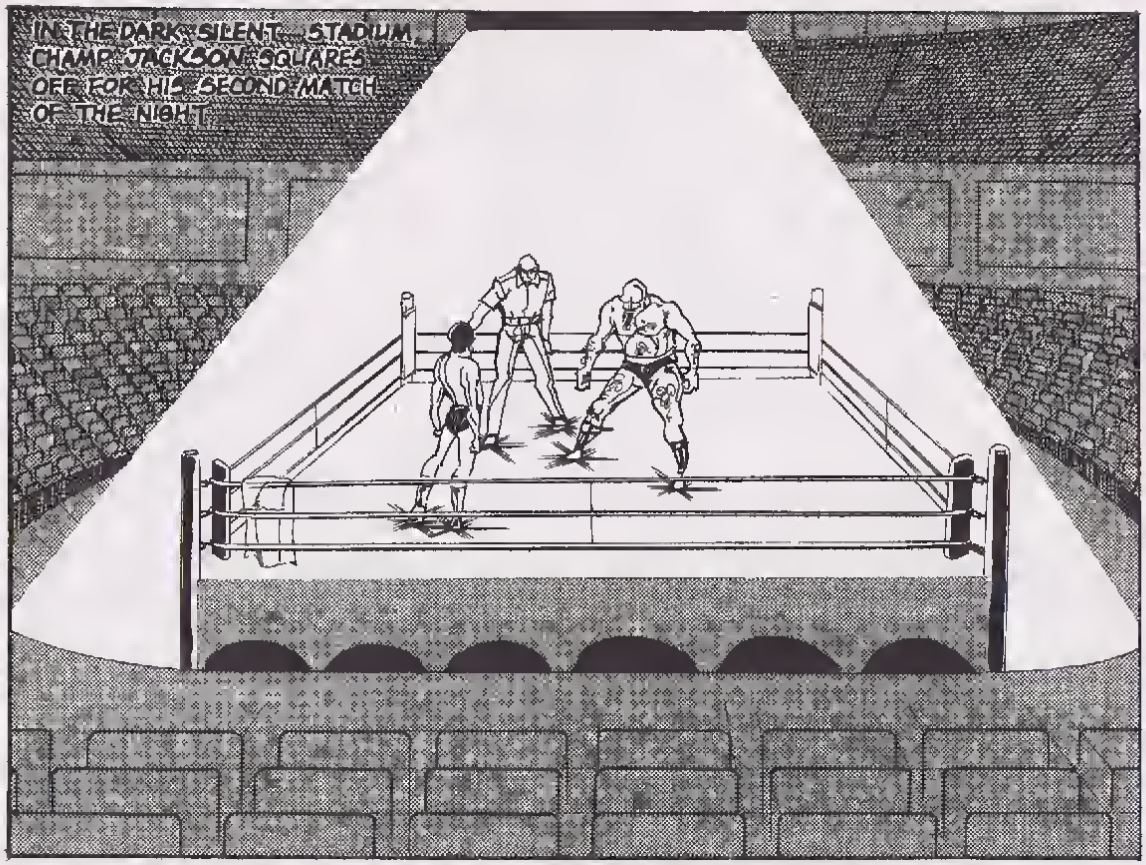
IT'S THEM, BOSS. WITH DREAD SKULL.

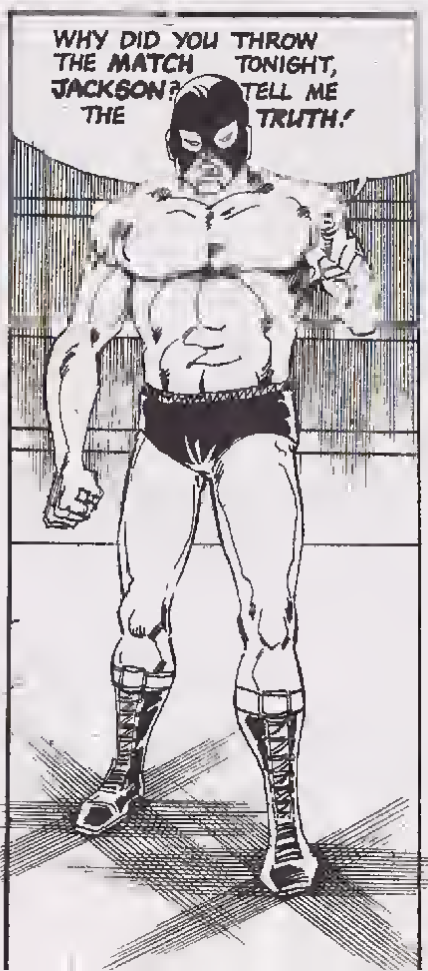
VZZZZZ
SNAP!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, PULLING OUT IN FRONT OF THE BOSS LIKE THAT? WATCH YOUR MANNERS.
I DON'T CARE IF HE'S THE GODFATHER! YOU JUST DELIVER WHAT YOU PROMISED US, OKAY?
WHY, YOU BOYS THINK MAYBE THE BOSS DON'T LIVE UP TO HIS WORD? YOU WATCH YOUR HEAD...

YOU SURE IT'S ALL HERE?
IF YOU DON'T TRUST THE BOSS, YOU JUST COME OUT AND LET'S COUNT IT TOGETHER.
WELL... HEH, HEH... I GUESS I CAN TRUST PANCIONE TO KEEP HIS END OF THE DEAL. TELL HIM IT'S NICE DOING BUSINESS WITH HIM.
NICE TO MEET YOU, BOSS. I'VE HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU.

YOU DID A FINE JOB TONIGHT, DREAD SKULL.
THEY'RE AT THE RIGHT RANGE, BOSS.
WELL, WELL... TIME TO KEEP MY END OF THIS EXPLOSIVE DEAL...

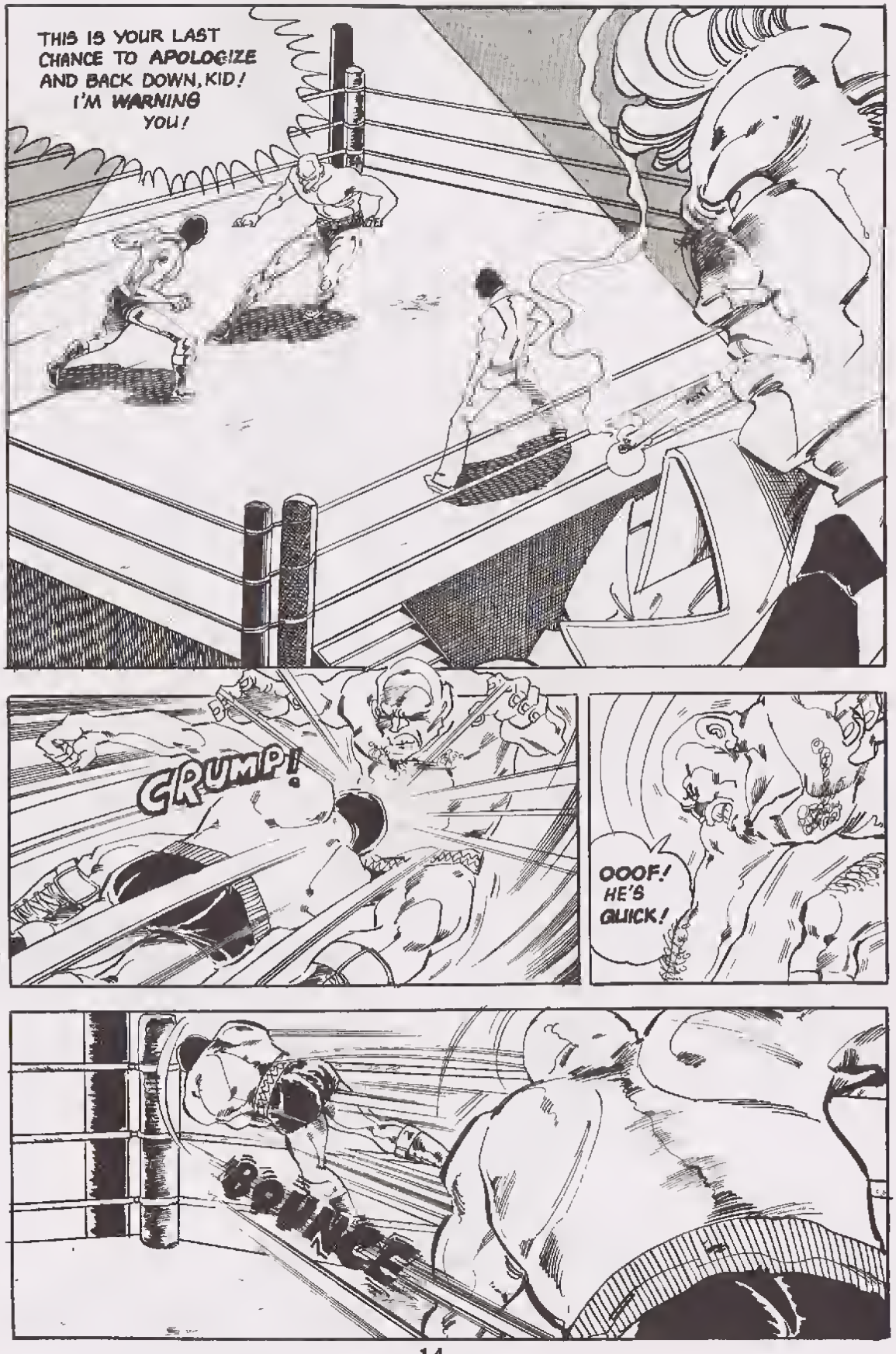

LET THEM TAKE THE MONEY AND ENJOY IT IN A NICE, HOT CLIMATE. I HERE THE DOLLAR IS DOING FINE IN HELL THESE DAYS...
KLIK
KKA
BLOOM


IN THE DARK, SILENT... STADIUM, CHAMP JACKSON SQUARES OFF FOR HIS SECOND MATCH OF THE NIGHT.


WHY DID YOU THROW THE MATCH TONIGHT, JACKSON? TELL ME THE TRUTH!

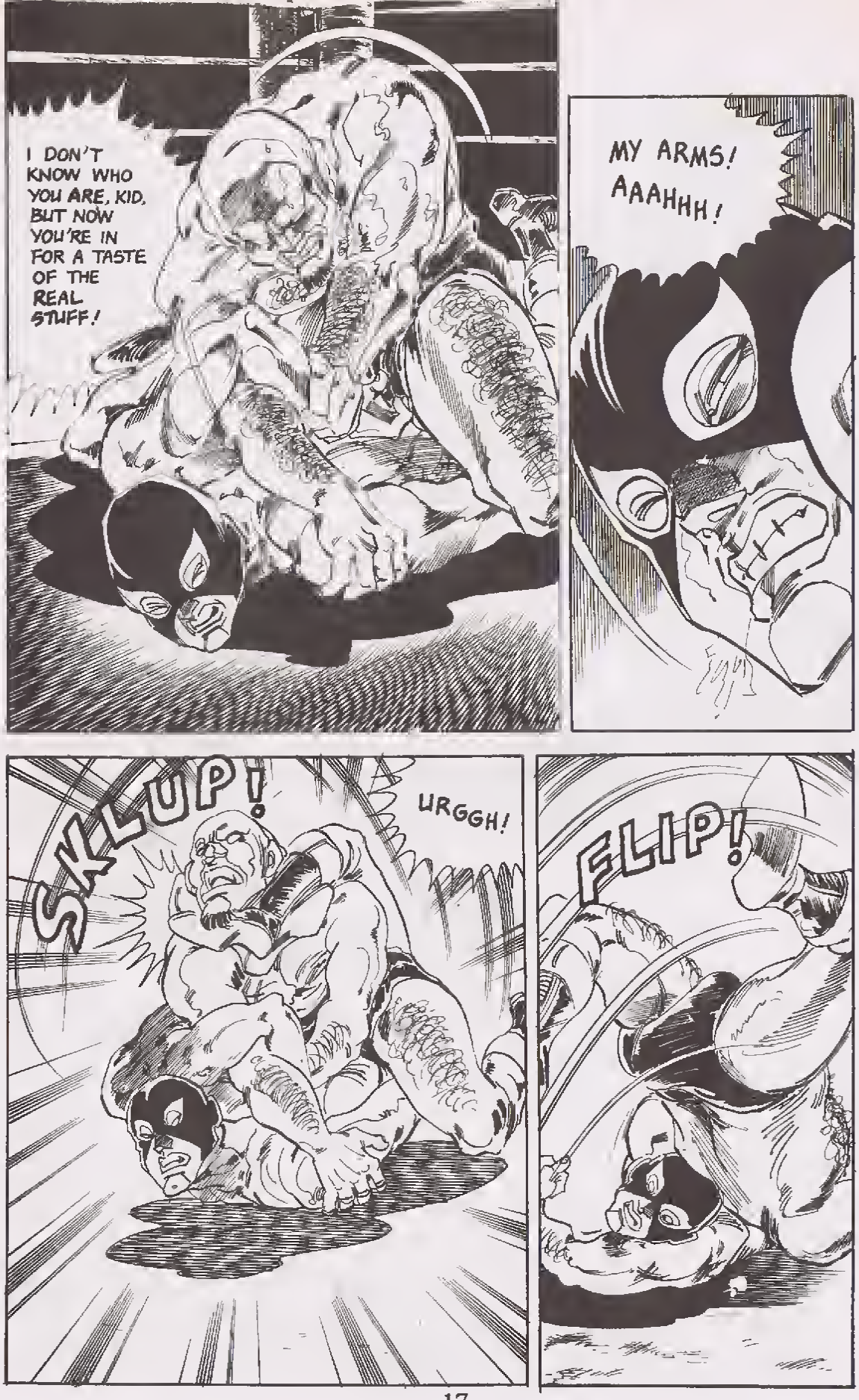
YOU'RE A COWARD, JACKSON. YOU LET SOME THUG BULLY YOU INTO LOSING AGAINST A NOBODY. OR WAS IT THE MONEY? HUH, JACKSON?
I NEVER LOSE FOR MONEY...

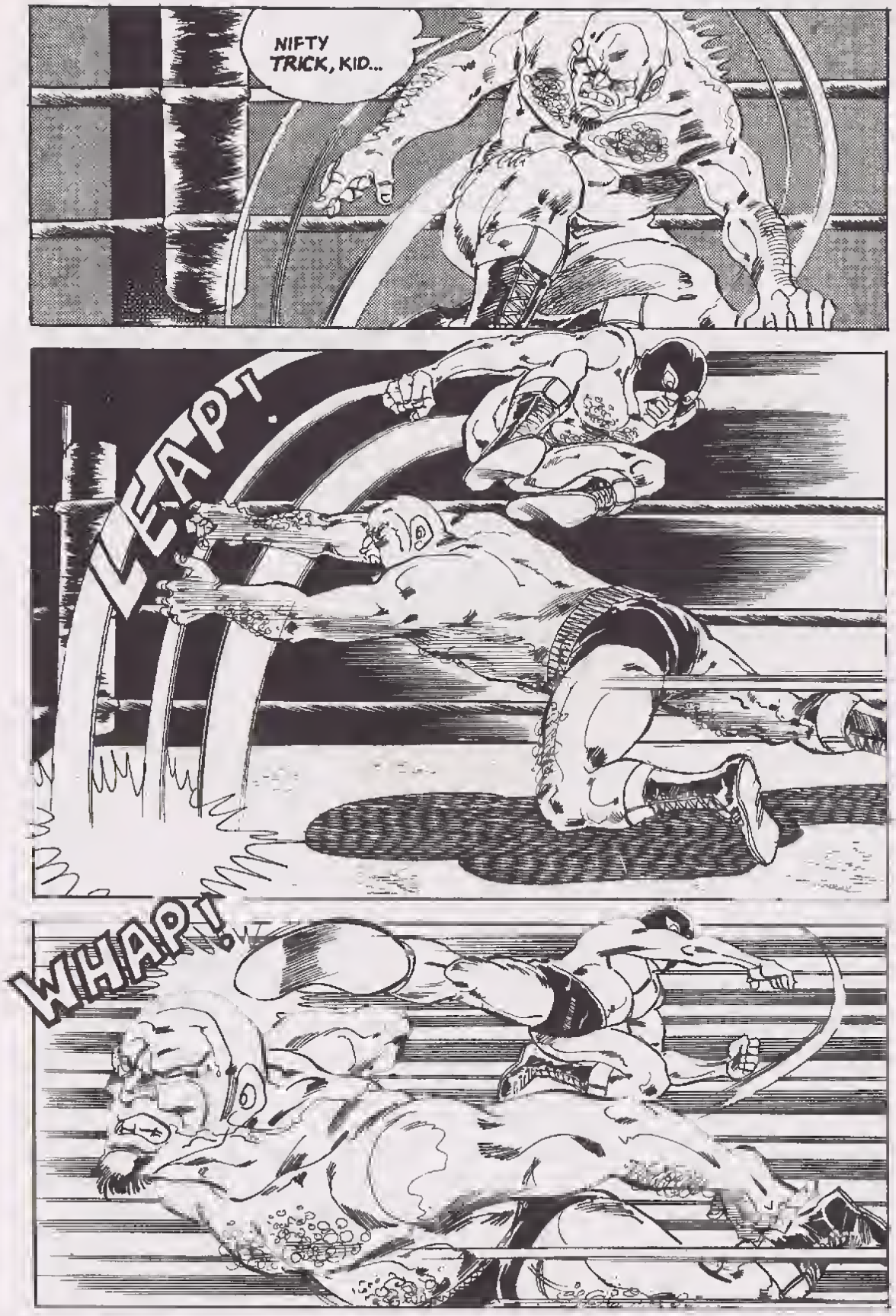
TELL ME WHO RIGGED THE MATCH TONIGHT, JACKSON. PEOPLE HAVE DIED FOR IT...
WHO IN THE BLAZES IS THIS KID?
WERE YOU AFRAID THEY'D COME FOR YOUR PATHETIC LIFE, TOO? YOU'RE A COWARD, JACKSON!
NOBODY CALLS ME A COWARD!
WUMP!

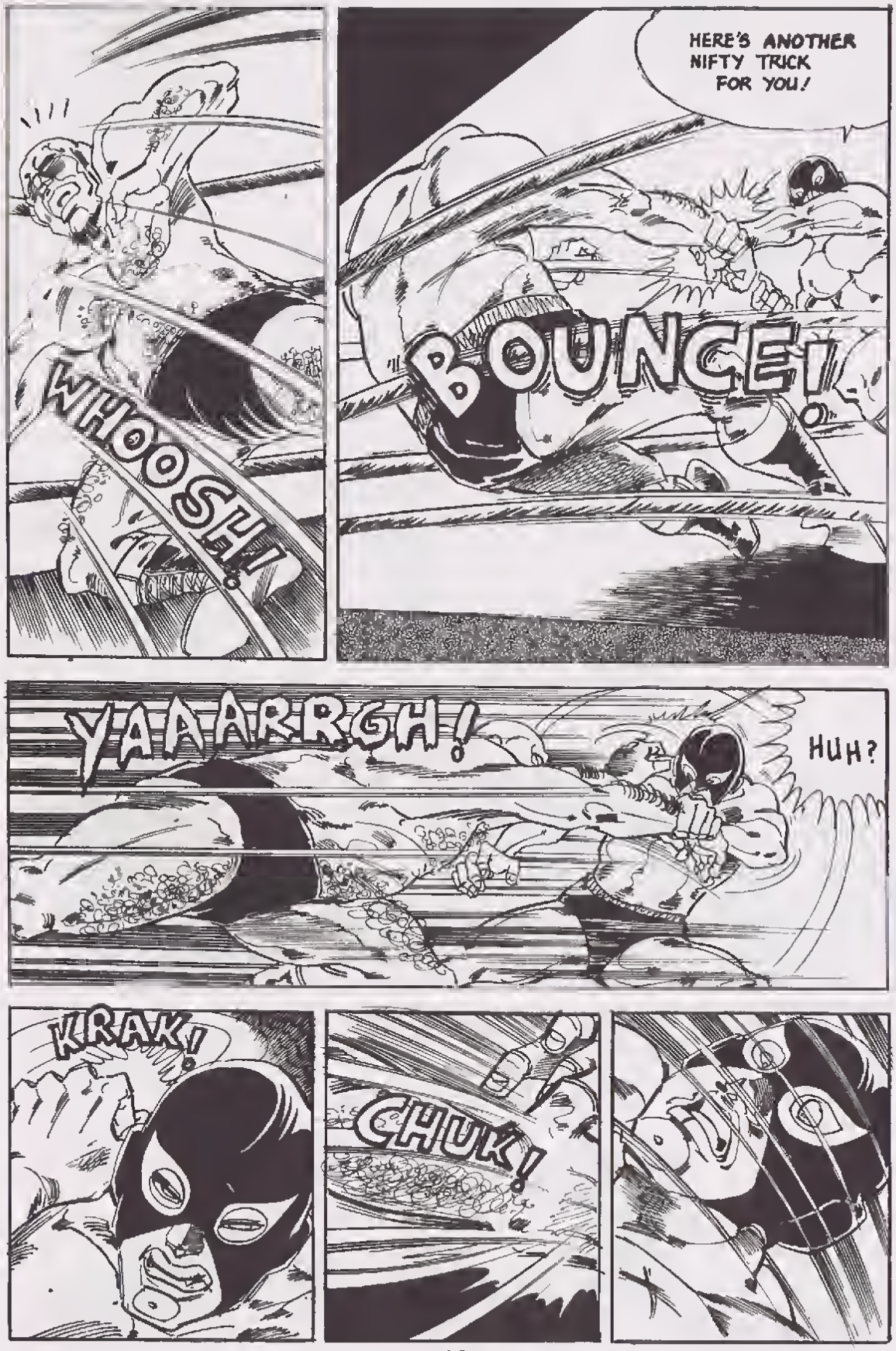

THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE TO APOLOGIZE AND BACK DOWN, KID! I'M WARNING YOU!
CRUMP!
OOOF! HE'S QUICK!
BOUNCE

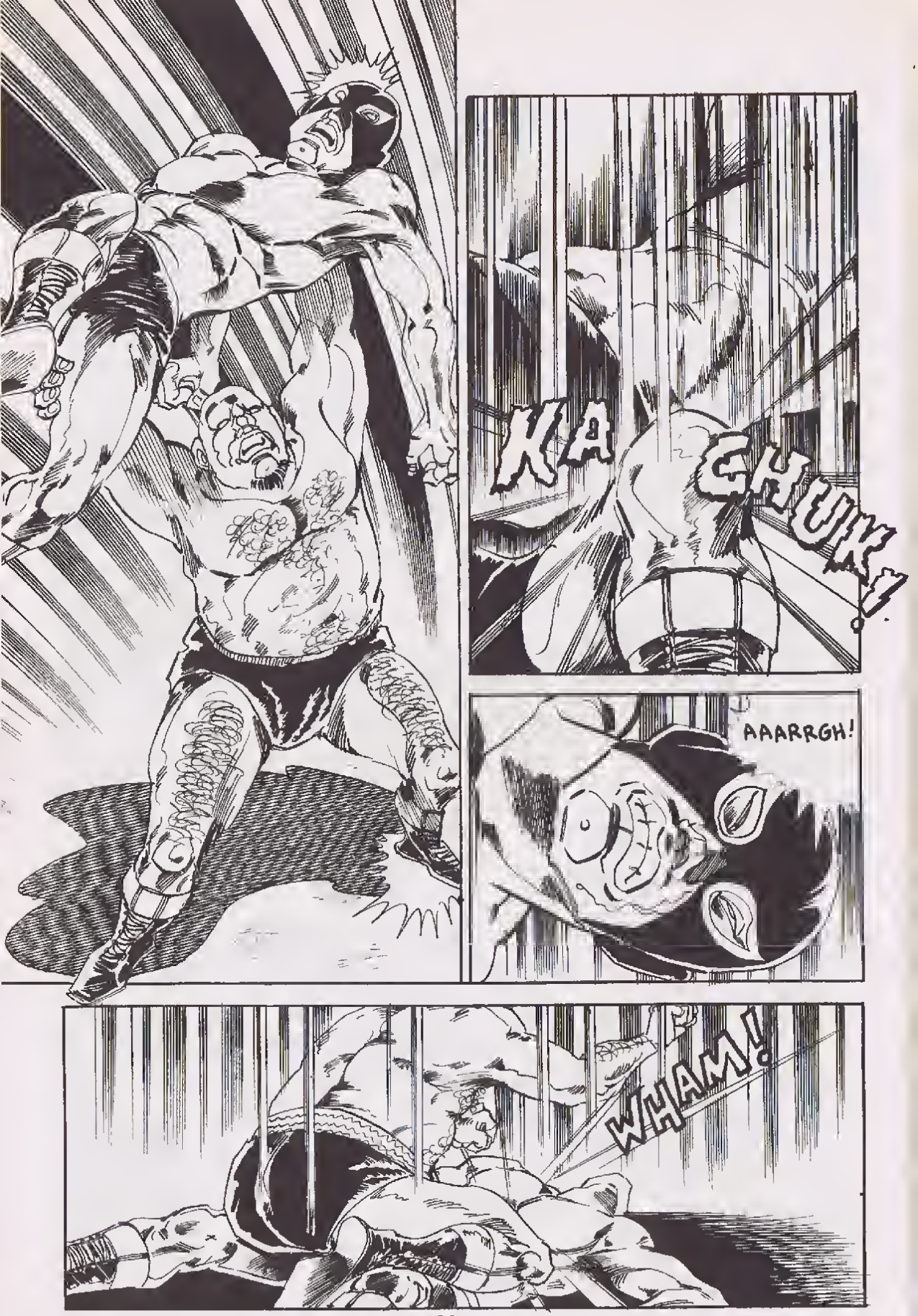
SMAK!
KRAK!
WHUMP!

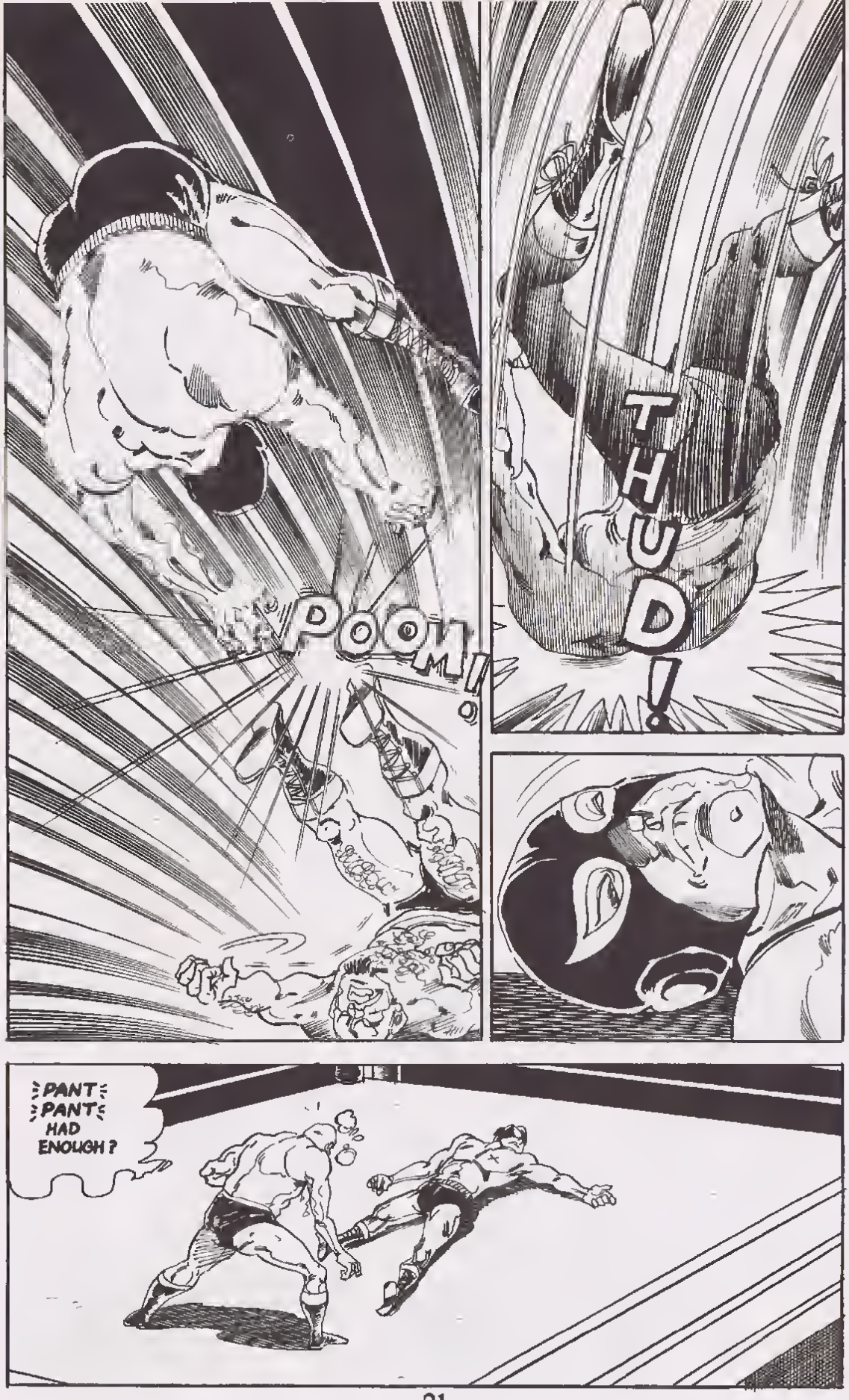
GET UP, JACKSON! TELL ME WHO PAID YOU OFF!
SHUT UP, KID! SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
HE DOESN'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT WRESTLING, BUT THIS KID'S GOT SOME NICE MOVES...
POUNCE!
YAARRGH!
KRASH!


I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, KID. BUT NOW YOU'RE IN FOR A TASTE OF THE REAL STUFF!
MY ARMS! AAAHHH!
SKLUP!
URGGH!
FLIP!

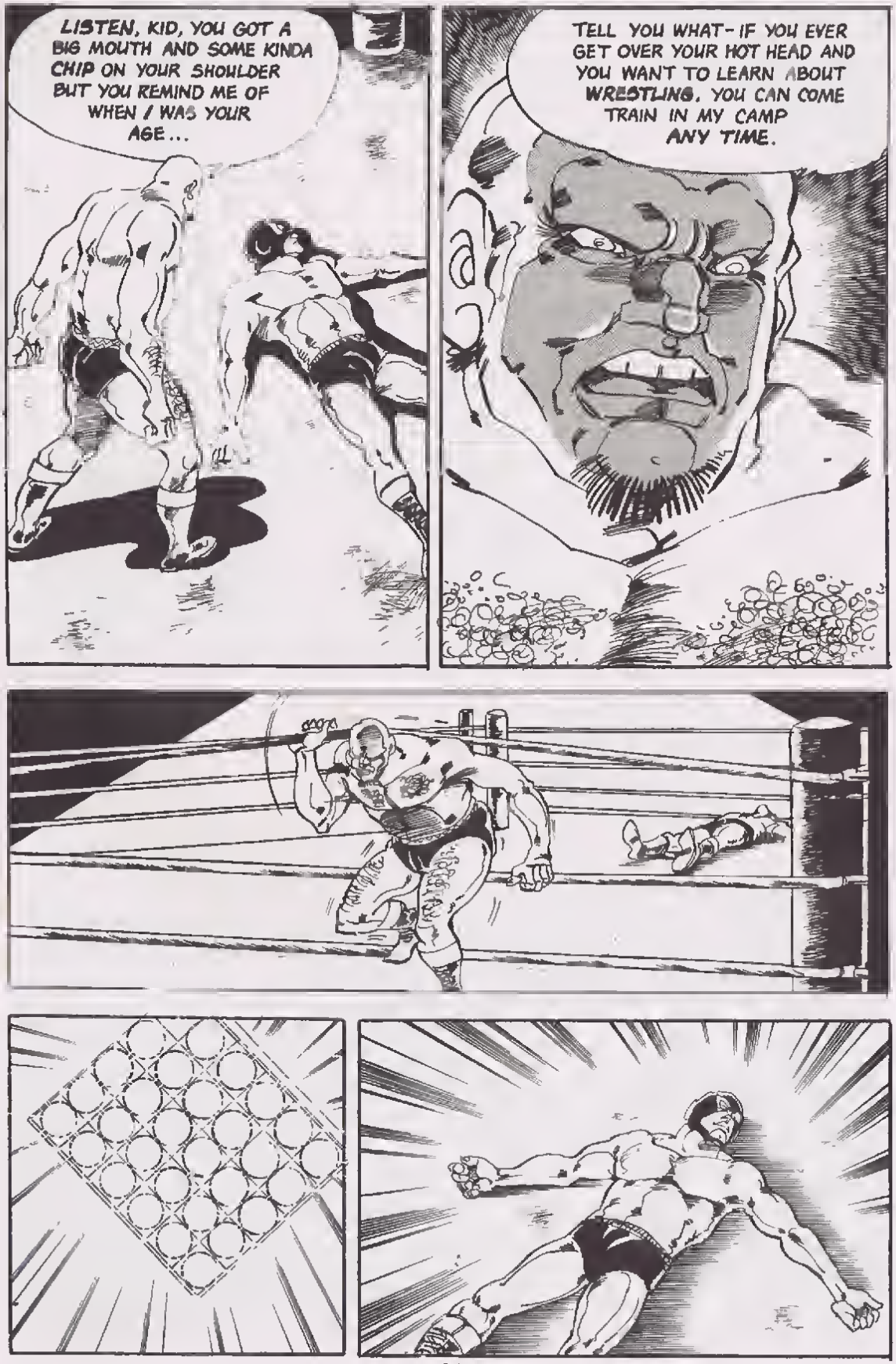

NIFTY TRICK, KID...
LEAP!
WHAP!

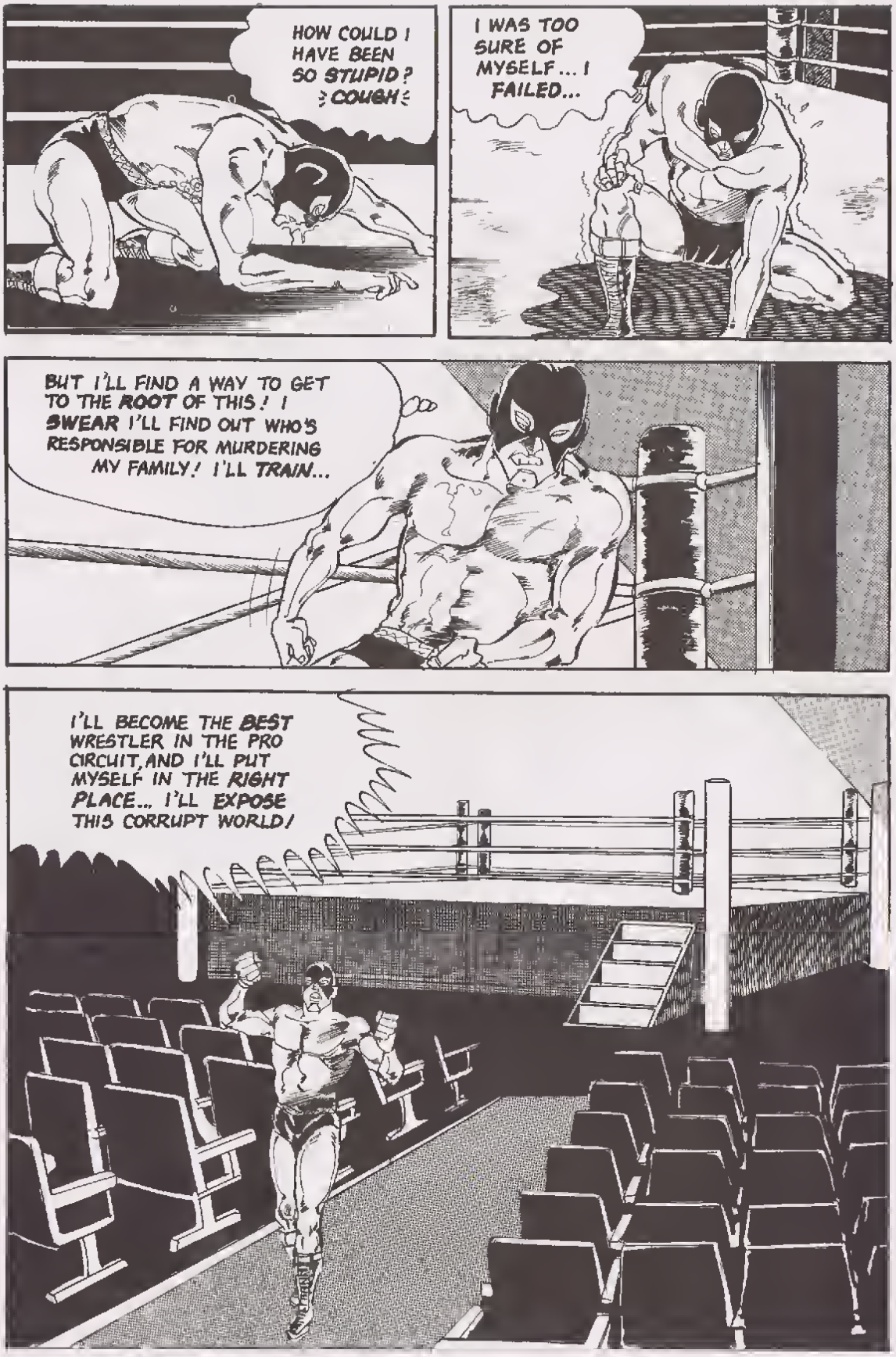

WHOOSH!
HERE'S ANOTHER NIFTY TRICK FOR YOU!
BOUNCE!
YAAARRGH!
HUH?
KRAK!
CHUK!

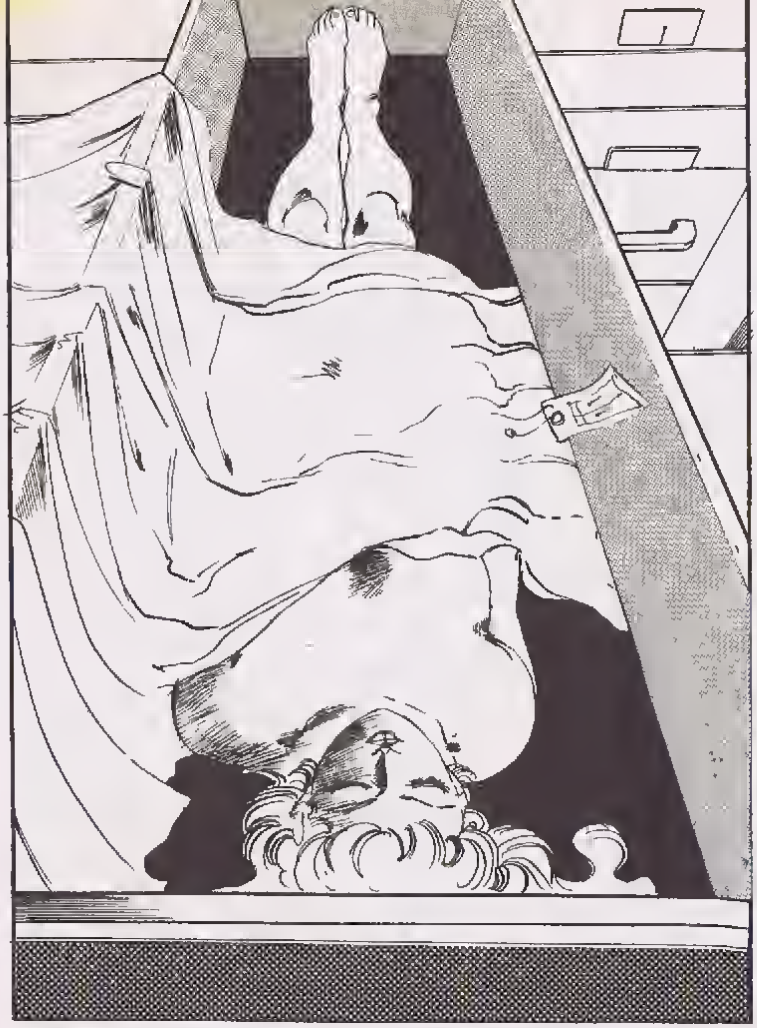

KA
CHUK!
AAARRGH!
WHAM!


POOM!
THUD!
PANT PANT
HAD ENOUGH?

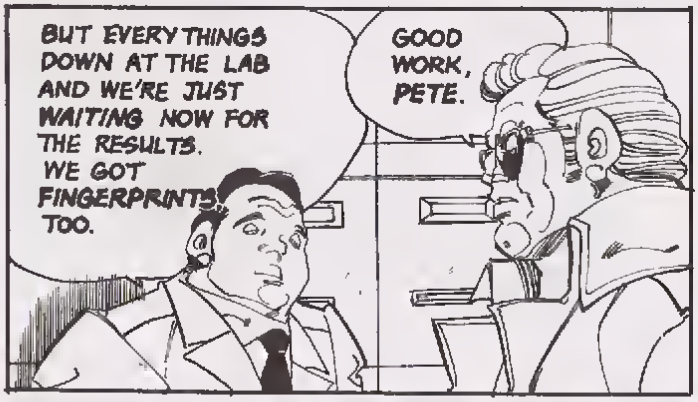
WHAT A MOVE! I GUESS THEY CALL IT THE GRAND SLAM FOR A GOOD REASON...
TOK
GRIND
NOW LET'S HAVE A PEEK UNDER YOUR SILLY LITTLE BLACK MASK...
NAH! I'LL LET YOU KEEP YOUR SECRET IF IT MEANS SO MUCH.

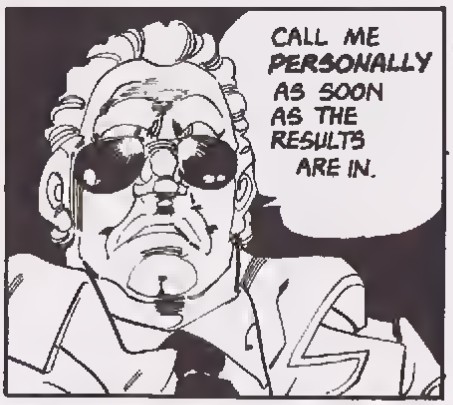

LISTEN, KID, YOU GOT A BIG MOUTH AND SOME KINDA CHIP ON YOUR SHOULDER BUT YOU REMIND ME OF WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE...
TELL YOU WHAT- IF YOU EVER GET OVER YOUR HOT HEAD AND YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT WRESTLING, YOU CAN COME TRAIN IN MY CAMP ANY TIME.

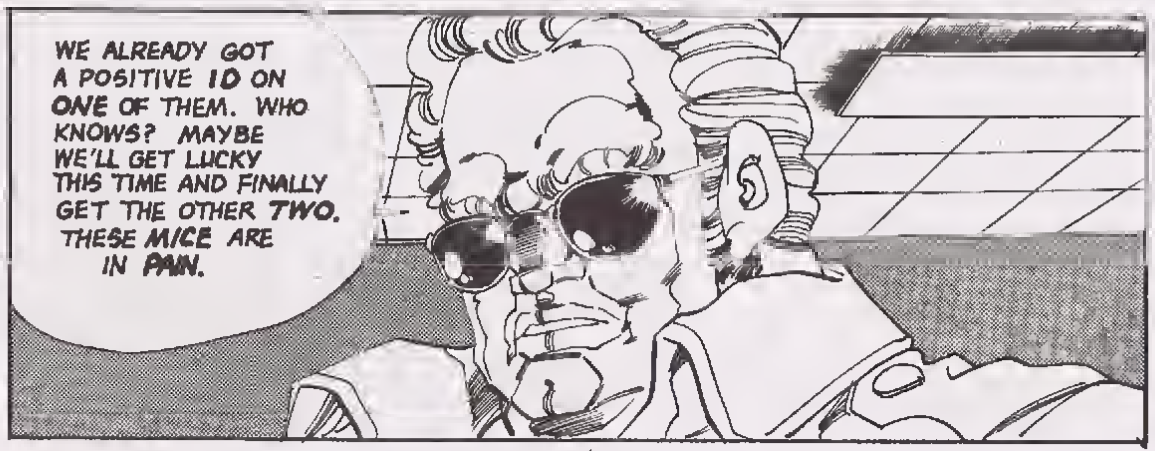

HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO STUPID? ;COUGH;
I WAS TOO SURE OF MYSELF... I FAILED...
BUT I'LL FIND A WAY TO GET TO THE ROOT OF THIS! I SWEAR I'LL FIND OUT WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR MURDERING MY FAMILY! I'LL TRAIN...
I'LL BECOME THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE PRO CIRCUIT, AND I'LL PUT MYSELF IN THE RIGHT PLACE... I'LL EXPOSE THIS CORRUPT WORLD!



WELL, INSPECTOR, WE FOUND TRACES OF SKIN TISSUE, FIBER, AND SEMEN ON THE GIRL'S BODY. NO RESULTS YET...


BUT EVERYTHINGS DOWN AT THE LAB AND WE'RE JUST WAITING NOW FOR THE RESULTS. WE GOT FINGERPRINTS, TOO.
GOOD WORK, PETE.

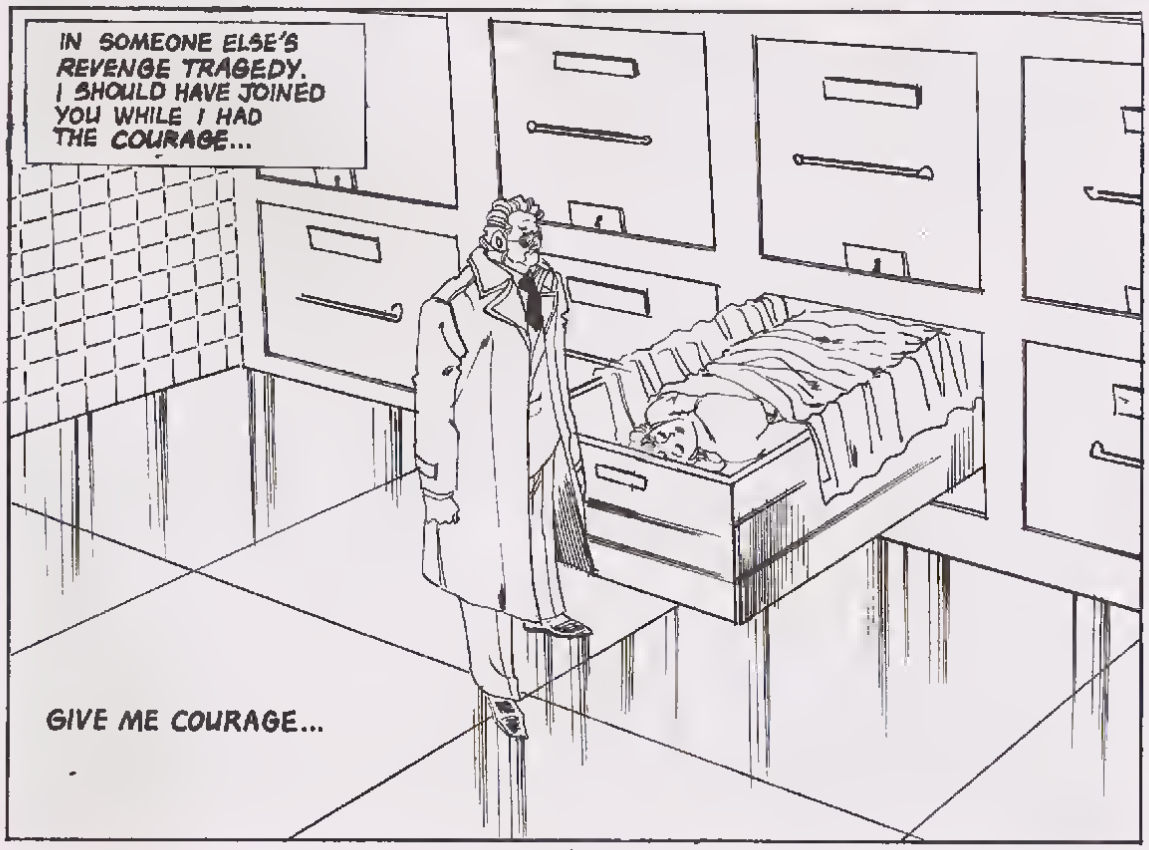

CALL ME PERSONALLY AS SOON AS THE RESULTS ARE IN.


WE ALREADY GOT A POSITIVE ID ON ONE OF THEM. WHO KNOWS? MAYBE WE'LL GET LUCKY THIS TIME AND FINALLY GET THE OTHER TWO. THESE MICE ARE IN PAIN.

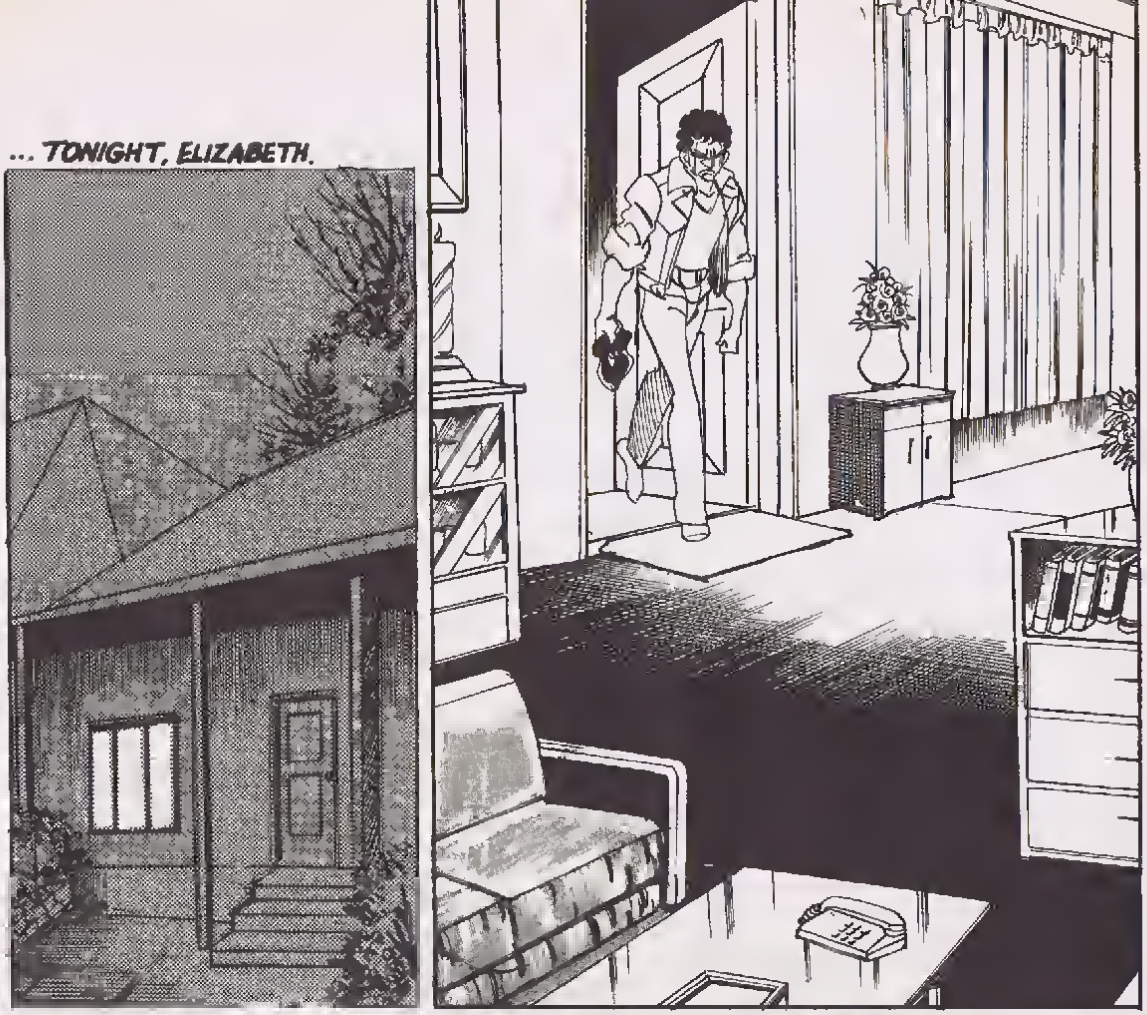
ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO INSPECTOR?
GO ON, PETE, I'LL CLOSE UP FOR YOU
KATHY ROY!..
I ONCE RECITED THESE LINES FOR A GIRL LIKE YOU...
... "MORE COURTSHIP LIVES IN CARRION FLIES THAN ROMEO, THEY MAY SEIZE ON THE WONDER OF DEAR JULIET'S HAND, AND STEAL IMMORTAL BLESSING FROM HER LIPS, WHO, EVEN IN PURE AND VESTAL MODESTY, STILL BLUSH, AS THINKING THEIR OWN KISSES SIN... *
*ROMEO AND JULIET (I-III-34-9)

FOR ALL THESE YEARS I THOUGHT I HAD SUCCEEDED IN FORGETTING YOU, ELIZABATH. BUT NOW SOME CRUEL SYNCHRONICITY BRINGS YOU BACK TO HAUNT ME... OPHELIA DROWNED AFTER A LOVER'S TRAGEDY...

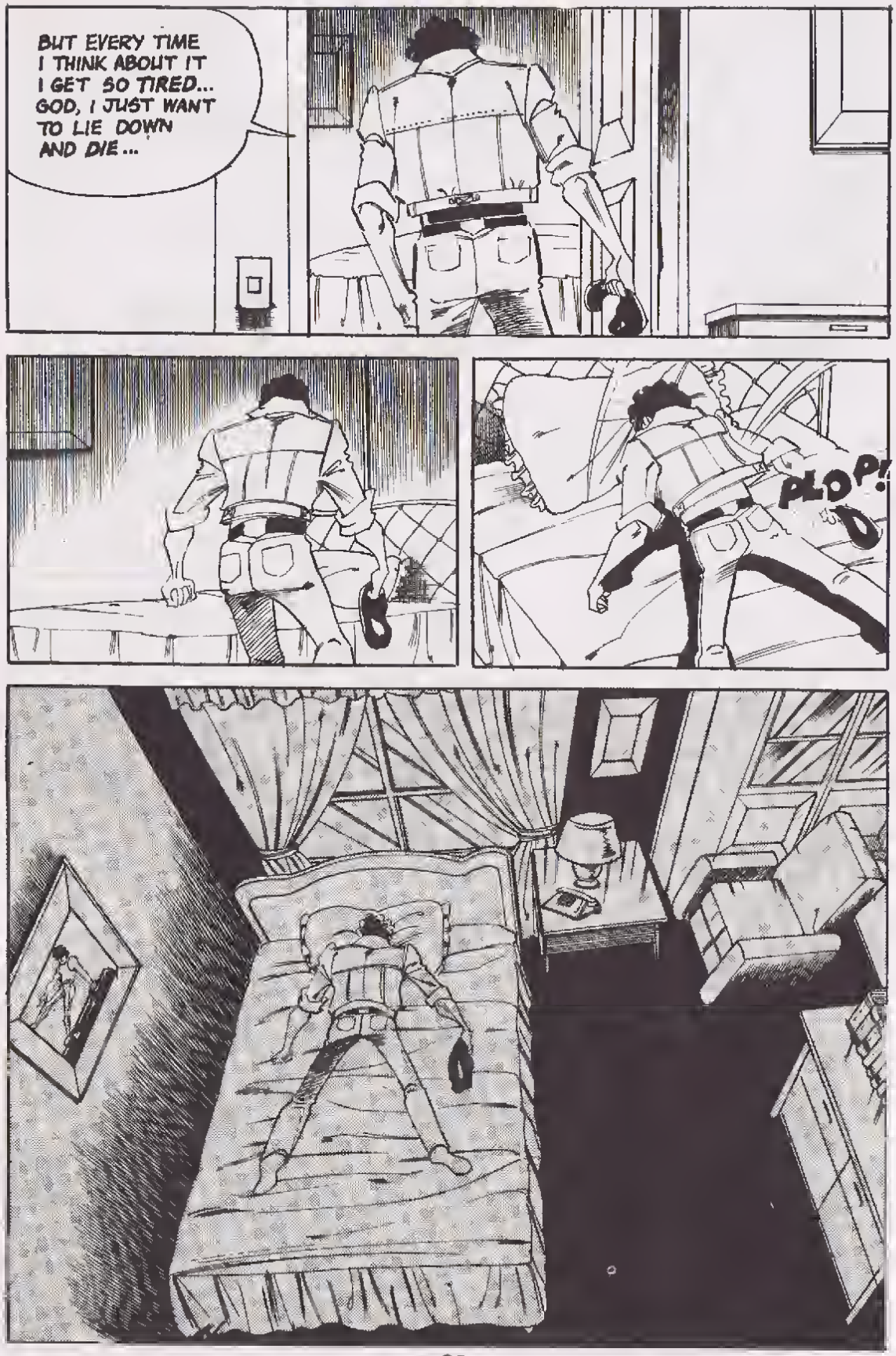
TWENTY YEARS AGO I STOOD JUST LIKE THIS, LOOKING HOPELESSLY DOWN AT YOUR PALE, BLUE FLESH... I WAS AN ACTOR THEN, AND NOW I FIND MYSELF PLAYING COP...


IN SOMEONE ELSE'S REVENGE TRAGEDY. I SHOULD HAVE JOINED YOU WHILE I HAD THE COURAGE...
GIVE ME COURAGE...

... TONIGHT, ELIZABETH.



MOM, DAD, KATHY... I'VE FAILED YOU. I ALWAYS ACT BEFORE I'VE THOUGHT THINGS THROUGH. I'M SORRY I'VE DONE IT AGAIN. BUT I'LL FIND THEM, I SWEAR.

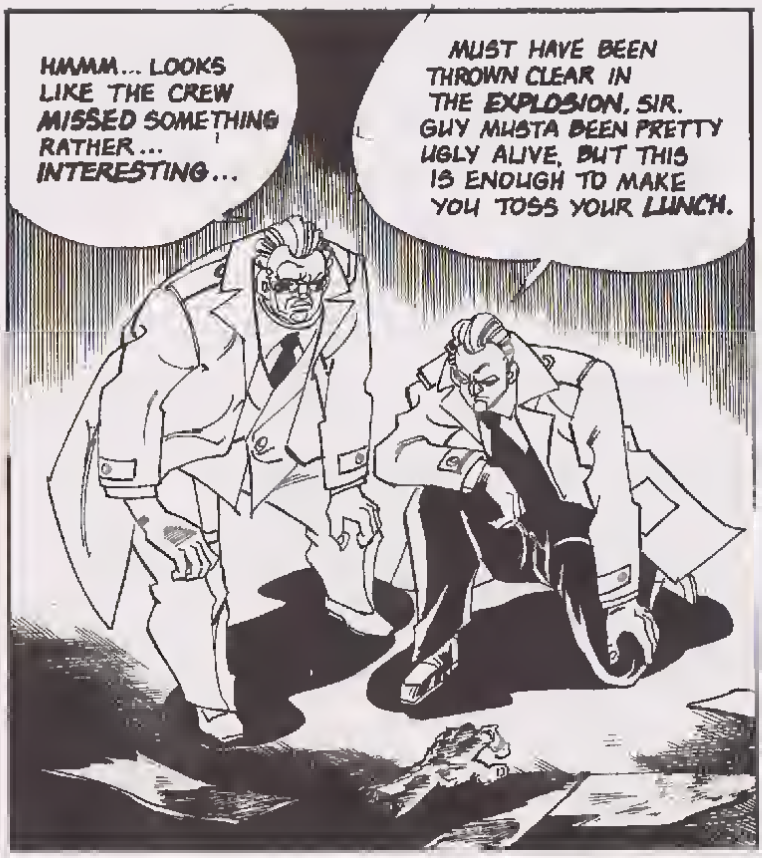

BUT EVERY TIME I THINK ABOUT IT I GET SO TIRED... GOD, I JUST WANT TO LIE DOWN AND DIE...
PLOP!

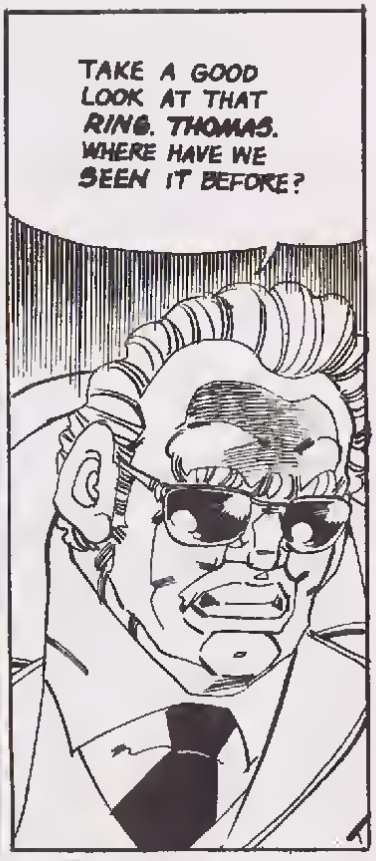
SO, THOMAS, WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS MOST PECULIAR TURN OF EVENTS?
COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE A COINCIDENCE, INSPECTOR.
IT SEEMS TO ME THAT SOMEONE HAS ORCHESTRATED THIS ENTIRE SERIES OF DEATHS... A DIRECTOR OF SORTS...
YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO SEE THINGS IN TERMS OF THE STAGE, SIR.

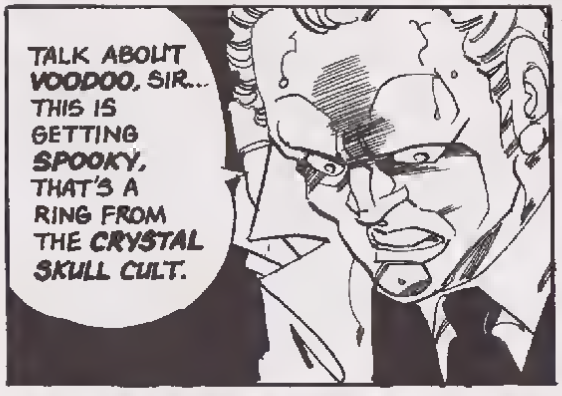
IT'S A USEFUL METAPHOR AT TIMES. THIS LIFE IS JUST A DREAM, THOMAS. SOMEDAY WE WAKE AND FIND OURSELVES RELIEVED IT'S ALL OVER...
IF THIS IS ALL A DREAM, SIR, I'D LIKE TO WAKE UP SOMEWHERE IN THE BAHAMAS WITH A COLD DRINK IN MY HAND.
AND THEN WHAT, EH? HOW WOULD YOU LIVE OUT THAT OTHER LIFE? WOULD YOU HAVE SOME GREATER ASPIRATIONS, OR WOULD YOU BE A PRO WRESTLER?
I HAVE A HUNCH THAT THE SAME PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED HERE. A LOCAL MAFIA BOSS IS TRYING TO STEAL THE SHOW. SAME OLD STORY.
CERTAINLY FITS WITH YOUR THEORY, SIR.
SEND SOMEONE DOWN TO PICK UP THAT OTHER PROMOTER- ROBERT WILSON— IN FOR QUESTIONING. HE MAY BE READY TO TALK NOW.
YES SIR. YOU KNOW WHAT, SIR? IN THAT OTHER LIFE, I'D...

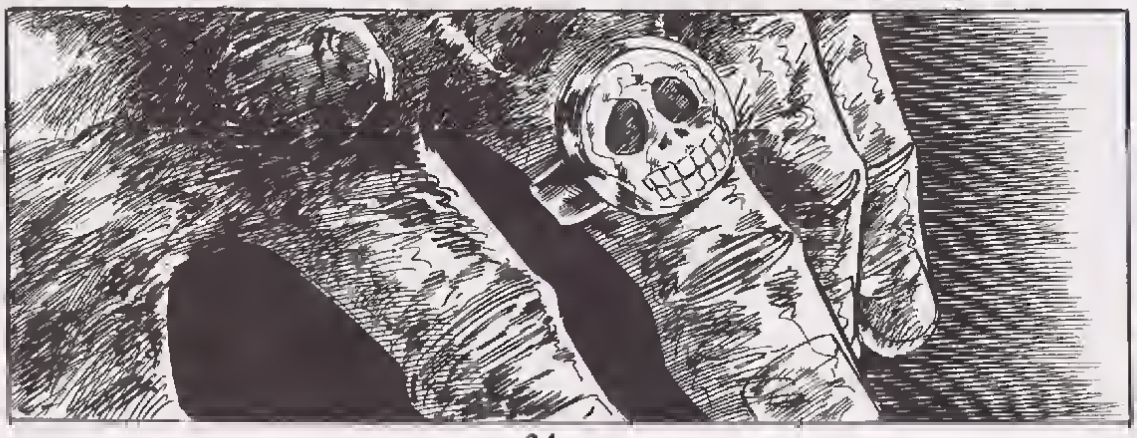
KENT
KENT
KENT
KING SIZE
YOU'D BE A SELF INDULGENT FOOL LIKE ME. DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING AGAINST ME, THOMAS?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, SIR?
EVERY TIME WE TALK, YOU BURN ME UP. LIKE A VOODOO PRACTITIONER BURNING AN EFFIGY OF HIS VICTIM...
INSPECTOR, I'M AFRAID I DON'T FOLLOW YOU AT ALL. ARE YOU MAD AT ME FOR SOMETHING?
NO, THOMAS! IT'S YOUR CIGARETTES! YOU'VE SWITCHED TO KENTS - SAME BRAND I SMOKE.

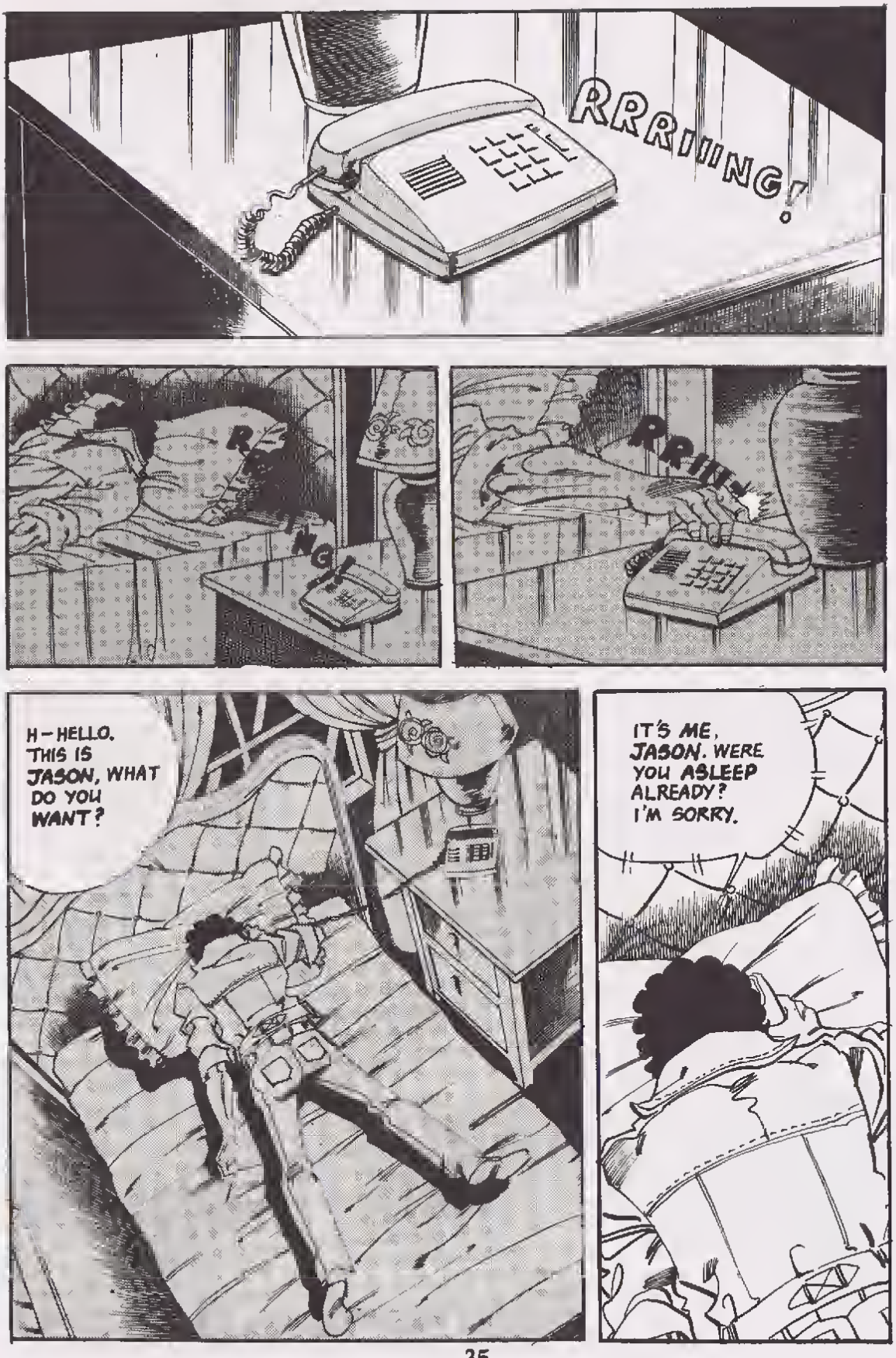
GEE, YOU HAD ME GOING FOR A MOMENT, INSPECTOR
AH HA! HA HA! LIGHTEN UP THOMAS!
FOOSH!
INSPECTOR, I THINK YOU SHOULD HAVE A LOOK AT THIS..


HMMM... LOOKS LIKE THE CREW MISSED SOMETHING RATHER... INTERESTING...
MUST HAVE BEEN THROWN CLEAR IN THE EXPLOSION, SIR. GUY MUSTA BEEN PRETTY UGLY ALIVE, BUT THIS IS ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU TOSS YOUR LUNCH.

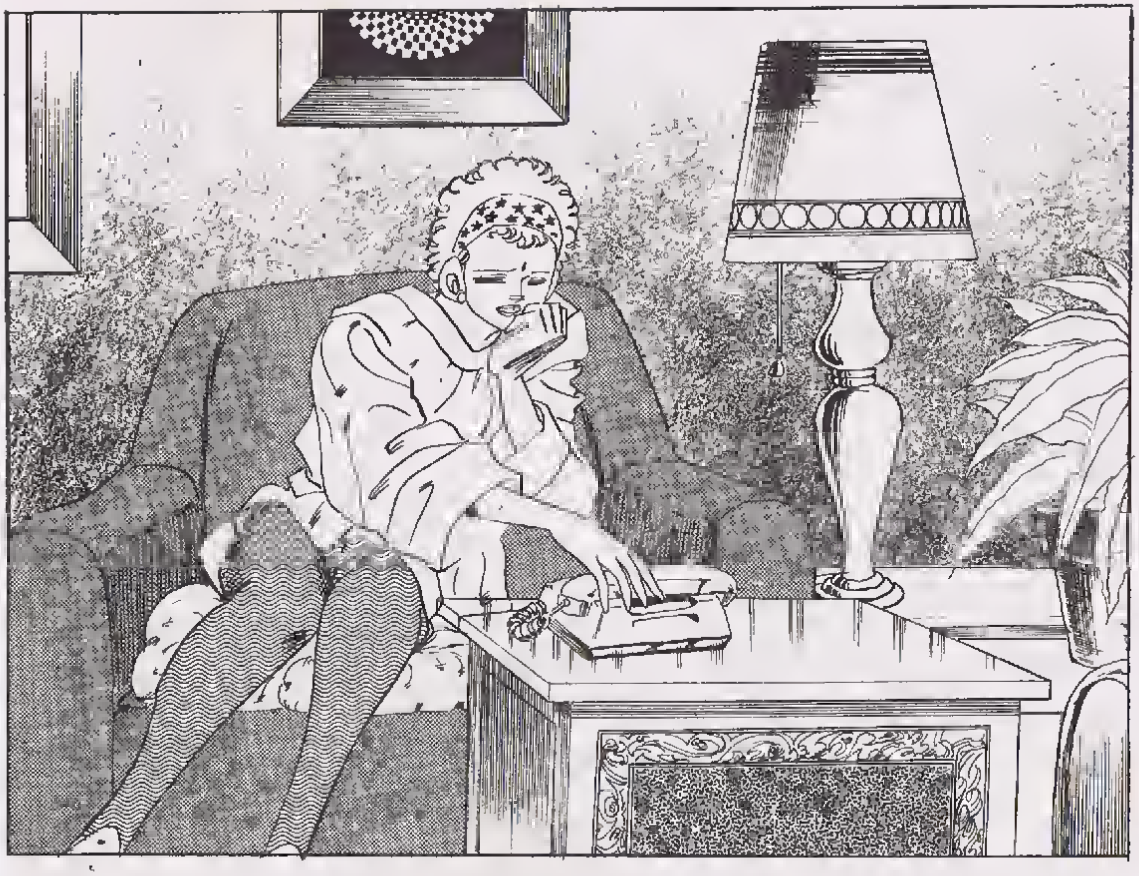

TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THAT RING, THOMAS. WHERE HAVE WE SEEN IT BEFORE?


TALK ABOUT VOODOO, SIR... THIS IS GETTING SPOOKY. THAT'S A RING FROM THE CRYSTAL SKULL CULT.

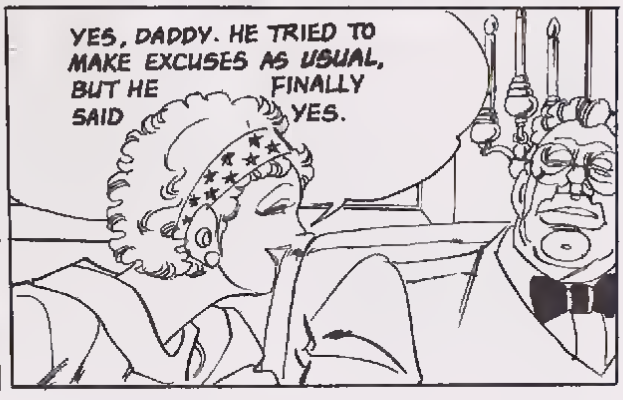


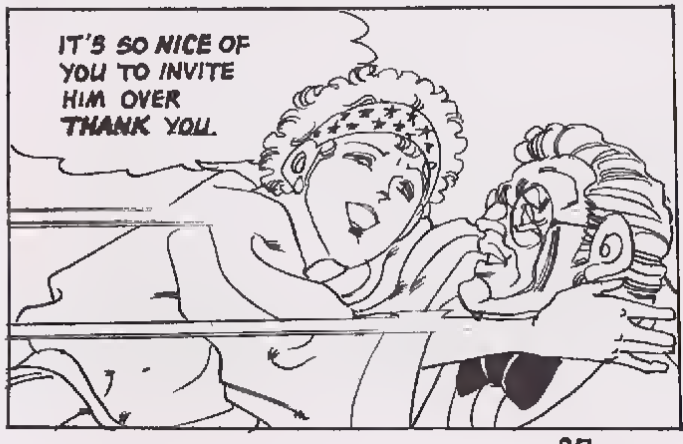

RRRIIING!
R
NG!
RRIII
H-HELLO. THIS IS JASON, WHAT DO YOU WANT?
IT'S ME, JASON. WERE YOU ASLEEP ALREADY? I'M SORRY.

WHAT IS IT, LENA? I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE YOU FOR A WHILE...
OH, JASON, STOP IT. WHAT ARE YOU DOING TOMORROW NIGHT? I'M INVITING YOU...
YOU CAN MAKE IT TO DINNER AT MY PLACE, CAN'T YOU, SINCE YOU'RE NOT SEEING ANYONE...
I CAN'T. I'M TOO BUSY THESE DAYS, LENA.
OH, JASON! COME ON. PLEASE?
I WENT OUT OF MY WAY TO SET THIS UP, AND MY FATHER WANTS TO MEET YOU.
ALL RIGHT, LENA. IF IT MEANS SO MUCH TO YOU, I'LL COME. BUT DON'T EXPECT ME TO BE PLEASANT COMPANY.
OH, JASON, I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T REFUSE YOU'LL HAVE A GOOD TIME. I PROMISE.



SO IS HE GOING TO COME OVER FOR DINNER WITH US HONEY?


YES, DADDY. HE TRIED TO MAKE EXCUSES AS USUAL, BUT HE FINALLY SAID YES.

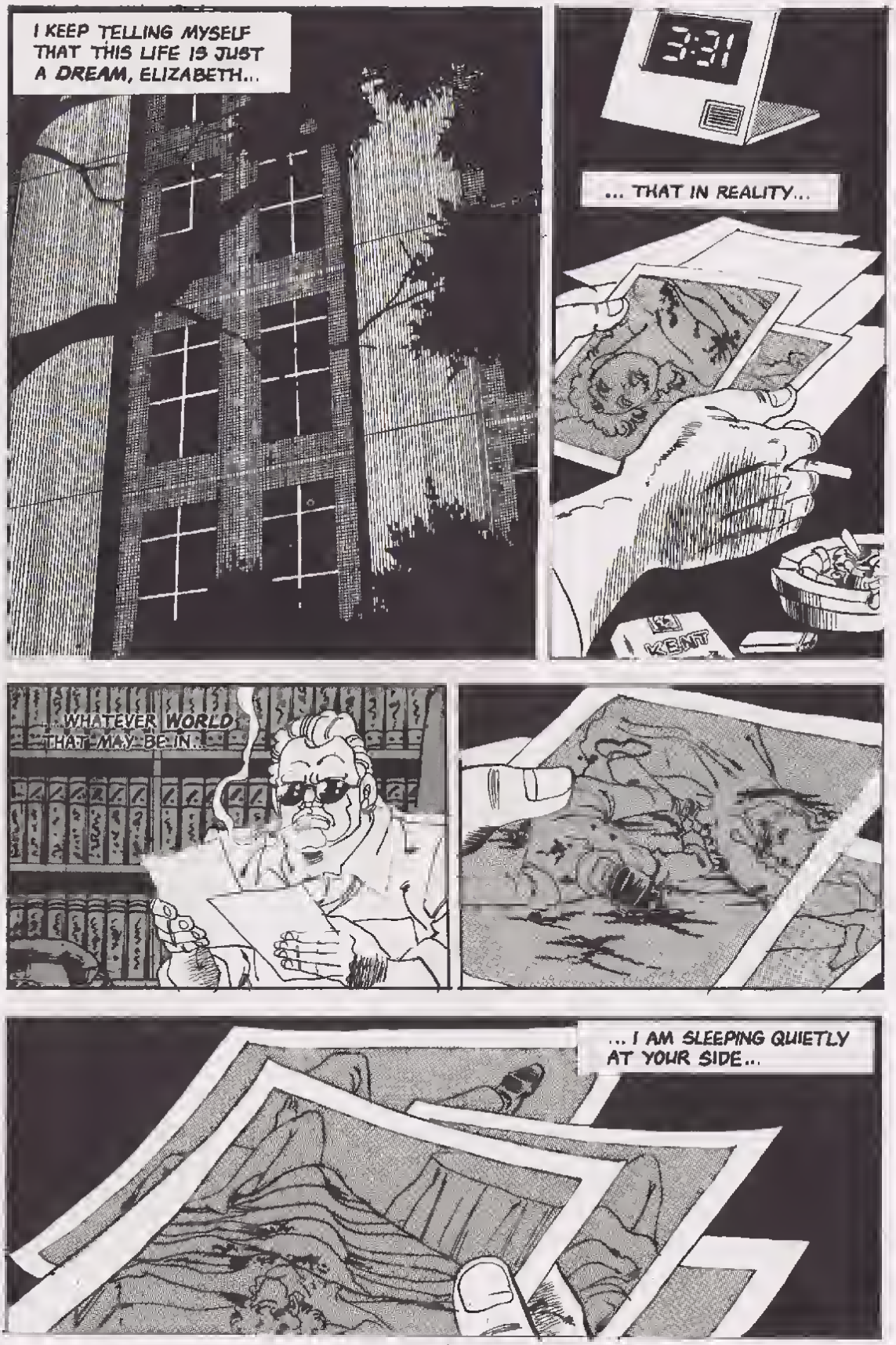

IT'S SO NICE OF YOU TO INVITE HIM OVER THANK YOU.

THERE'S NO NEED TO THANK ME, SWEETHEART.

I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU HATE ALL MY BOYFRIENDS. YOU DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH IT MEANS TO ME THAT YOU LIKE JASON.
AND HE REALLY NEEDS CHEERING UP AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS FAMILY.
COME ON, LENA, STOP IT, YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T INVITE HIM IF IT WASN'T GOING TO BE GOOD FOR ME, TOO.
THERE! IT'S WAY PAST YOUR BEDTIME. GET ON UP TO YOUR ROOM. YOU NEED YOUR REST.
SLAP

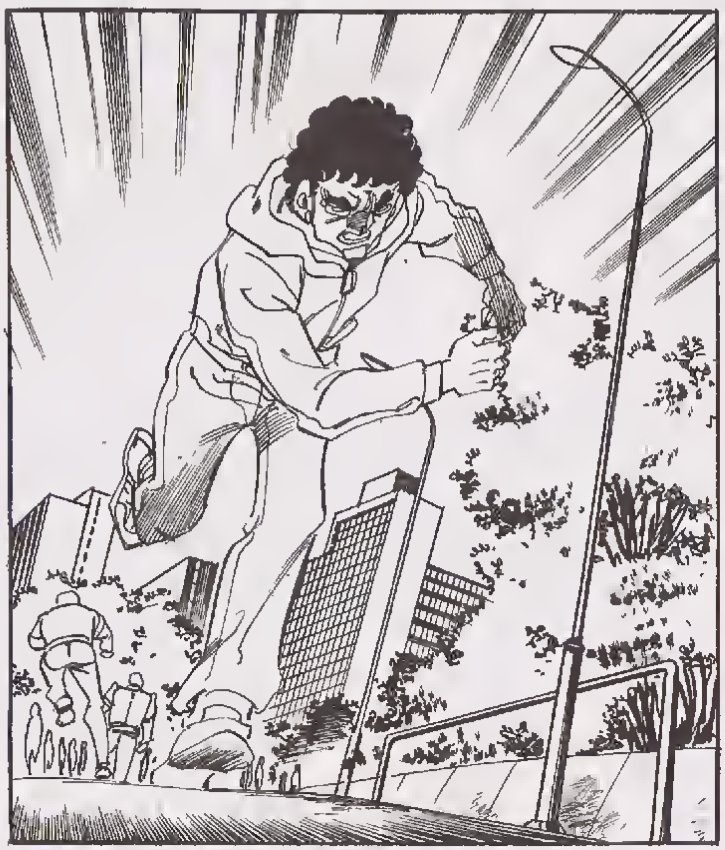
AND MAKE SURE THIS JASON BOY IS HERE IN TIME FOR DINNER. GOOD NIGHT, DARLING.
YES, DADDY, I WILL. GOOD NIGHT.
WELL, ROYT, OLD FRIEND, YOU'VE LEFT YOUR LEGACY TO ME... WILL HE KNOW HIS LAST MEAL WHEN HE TASTES IT?
OR IS HE AS DENSE AS YOU WERE?
2
3
3
5
6

DAWN! WHO WANTS TO BUG US SO LATE, HUH?
MAKE IT SHORT AND SWEET, I'M ON A STREAK HERE.
RRIIING!
SHADDUP, OKAY? IT'S THE BOSS! UH... YES, SIR, BOSS!
THIS TIME I'M MAKING IT EASY FOR YOU BOYS. JASON ROYT WILL BE HERE...
... FOR DINNER TOMORROW. I WANT YOU TO MAKE SURE IT'S HIS LAST SUPPER. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?
IF YOU FAIL THIS TIME I'LL CUT OFF YOUR TAILS WITH A CARVING KNIFE!
SURE, BOSS. NO MISTAKES THIS TIME... I PROMISE.

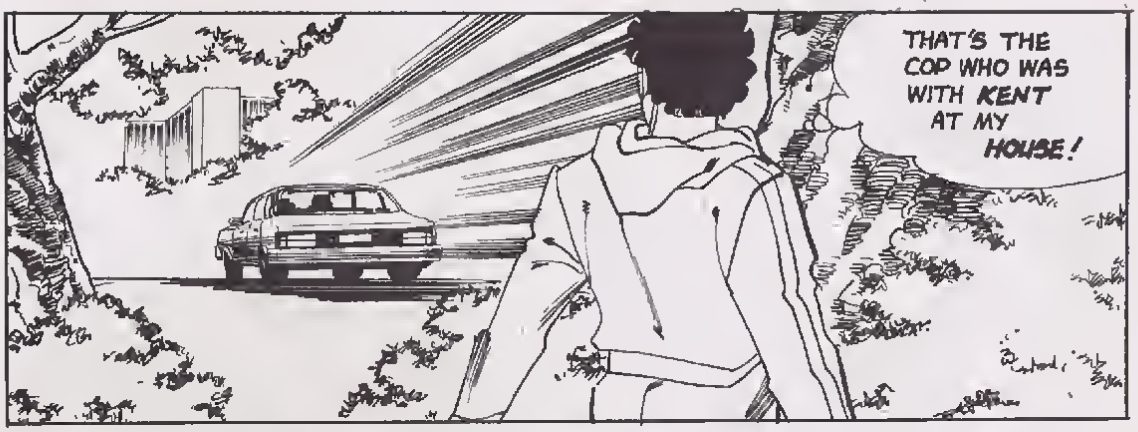

I KEEP TELLING MYSELF THAT THIS LIFE IS JUST A DREAM, ELIZABETH...
3:31
... THAT IN REALITY...
KENT
...WHATEVER WORLD THAT MAY BE IN...
... I AM SLEEPING QUIETLY AT YOUR SIDE...

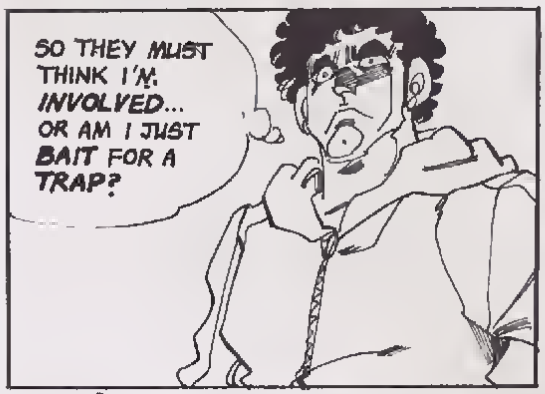
...HAVING A NIGHTMARE FROM WHICH YOU WILL WAKE ME.
BUT I MUST BE TIRED.
A HEAVY SLEEPER...
... AND THE NIGHTMARE MUST NOT BE VERY FRIGHTENING
BUT MAYBE, ELIZABETH..

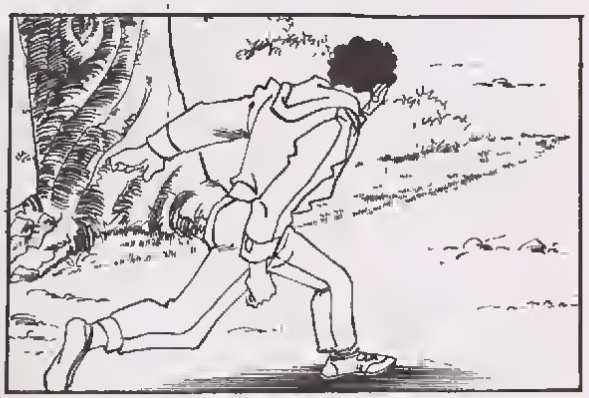
...IF THE DREAM WERE SOMEHOW THREATENING
IF I WERE IN DANGER...
IF I COULD COME TO HARM...
THEN YOU COULD WAKE ME FROM THIS SLEEPING SICKNESS...
DANGER...
HARM...
AH, YES...
HARM...
"COME THEN...
KA-HOK!
...FOR WITH A WOUND I MUST BE...
...CURED...'



THEY'VE BEEN ON MY TAIL ALL MORNING. TIME FOR EVASIVE ACTION... HERE...
BUT IS IT THE POLICE OR THE HOODS WHO MURDERED MY FAMILY? I'LL HAVE TO GET A GOOD LOOK AT THEIR FACES BEFORE I LOSE THEM...
ZZIIIP!


THAT'S THE COP WHO WAS WITH KENT AT MY HOUSE!


SO THEY MUST THINK I'M INVOLVED... OR AM I JUST BAIT FOR A TRAP?



LAURA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE SO EARLY IN THE MORNING? WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
SMAK!
YOU'RE A REAL BASTARD, JASON!
YOU REPORTED MY DAD TO THE POLICE, DIDN'T YOU? THEY CAME AND TOOK HIM AWAY LAST NIGHT!
TO BE CONTINED...

Eastern Comics™ JUNE 1988 RELEASES

THE FORBIDDEN KINGDOM #4

By Sung-Nam Ha

Will Sain arrive in time to save the heir and his family from certain death? A treacherous chancellor appears in the night to persuade a young lord to oust the dying emperor. The offer is very tempting.

BLACK MASK #3

By Jong-Jin Lee

A quiet dinner invitation leads to a harrowing nighttime chase down the coast highway as the unsuspecting JASON tries to outrun PANCIONE's henchmen. More comes to light on inspector KENT's strange past.

THE DEMON WARRIOR #7

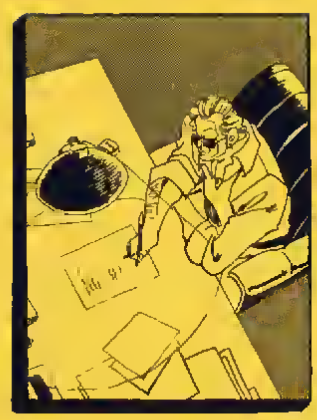
By Jae-Hak Lee

Ambush in the countryside! Why does Maehyang's husband have bodyguards? And why have the court schemers dispatched their best assassins to waylay him? Could the Demon Warrior, unbeknownst to himself, be the brother-in-law of the future ruler of China?

TRICKSTER KING MONKEY #2

By Hyun-Jong Choi

The Monkey King gets a summons from the Emperor of Jade and soars up into heaven to receive a grand and disappointing title. Can the Monkey King live happily in paradise, or does his impatience and quick temperment result, once again, in problems?



BLACKMASK

Jong-Jin Lee
Franz Henkel

Inspector Edgar Kent, Newport City Police Department, former Shakespearean actor... He likes to think that his life is just a dream, that he will wake up someday to happier times... If only he had the courage, if only he could find a way to shake off these webs of illusion, he would join his lost love in that other world. Perhaps tonight, in a room thick with melancholy, he will see a way...

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